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Clay MacCauley

CHRISTIANITY IN HISTORY

A Reply

It is the historical task of Christianity to assume with every succeeding age a fresh metamorphosis, and to be for ever spiritualizing more and more her understanding of the Christ.

Henri Frederic Amiel.

Tokyo : Japan

1891

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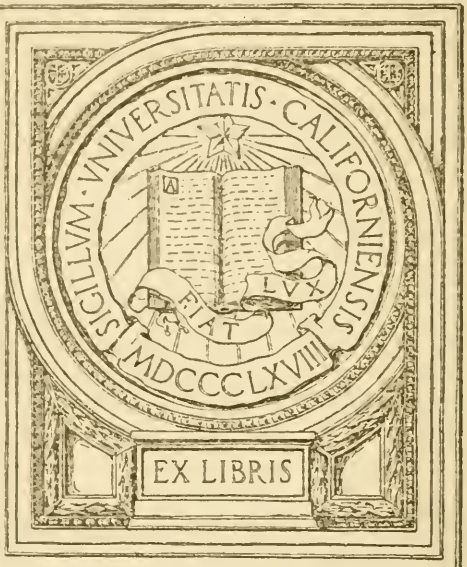

JOHN FISKE

PREFACE.

The first three of the following articles are, with some changes, letters written by me to the "*Japan Mail*," at intervals during the past few weeks, in reply to a sermon preached in Tokyo, by the Bishop of the Church of England in Japan. Dr. Bickersteth, with especial intent to guard Christian believers against what he designates "the assaults to which Christianity is now exposed" in Japan, classed among the assailants of Christianity, the body of religious believers and workers called Unitarians. I should not, however, have felt it incumbent upon me to take public notice of Dr. Bickersteth's discourse, had he not, in this exercise of his episcopal functions, and by newspaper publication, pronounced two judgments of grave import upon those who bear the Unitarian name:

First, that Unitarians are not entitled to the name Christian;

Second, that Unitarians no longer maintain that the New Testament teaches Unitarianism.

Fiske 1926

Moreover, the utterances of an ecclesiastic so high in dignity and authority as Dr. Bickersteth, may not, under present circumstances, be ignored. Under present circumstances, I say, for the episcopal sermon was but the decisive act in a series of events of a like kind from several sources. My reply therefore was directed to the Bishop of the Church of England chiefly as representing a number of the Orthodox Christians of Japan. It is my earnest wish that, once and for always, if possible, Unitarians and the Orthodox Christians of Japan may understand one another, and be understood by the Japanese people.

In writing the letters, I believe I was wholly free from "hatred and malice and all uncharitableness." I appreciate—no one, I think, appreciates more really, cheerfully or gratefully—the Christian truth embodied in the orthodox creeds, and the profound religious faith held, and beneficent work done, under Orthodox Christianity. The *odium theologicum*, so deplorable in religious controversy, therefore did not move me. It was my intention simply to give so clear a presentation of certain characteristics of Unitarianism, that, at least, misunderstandings and misstatements about it might not be truthfully made current

or be confirmed, among those who should read what I wrote.

As a lover of peace, as a seeker after union among the members of the Church universal, and for the sake of harmony in the Christian influences exerted upon the people of this empire, I deprecate the disturbing effects of even apparent dissension among those who profess to be animated by the spirit of Christ; but, after all, personal desire may not outweigh the claims of justice, nor should fear of arousing uncertainty and disquiet in others, prevent the setting right of a published wrong.

Since the letters were published, it has occurred to me that, were they supplemented by a sketch of the evolution and metamorphoses through which Christianity has passed from its beginnings, they might still better serve their original purpose, and, possibly, be of some permanent worth to Japanese students of Christian doctrine. Such additional matter has been prepared, and, with the original letters, is here offered to the public. In the illustrative quotations from authorities concerning Modern Unitarianism, I have drawn but little from the works of living writers, for the reason, that I have, at present, access to but few of the many books needed to make a representative summary.

This is the explanation of the absence from these pages of the testimony of several well known scholars and representative Unitarians.

A few words here, to make the position of Unitarianism yet more intelligible to those who may read what I have written, may not be out of place by way of preface to this reply.

Unitarianism is a religious movement, Christian in origin and history, but it is specifically distinguished among other forms of Christianity by the reliance of its advocates, for final authority in matters of faith and practice, upon the great Protestant principle of personal and private judgment. Also, to Unitarians, Christian truth lies not only in sacred tradition but in present thought and life. The enlightened and reverent reason, they believe, discloses ever growing revelation. By the exercise of free historical inquiry, moreover, they have come to the conclusion that, fundamental in the mind of Jesus of Nazareth, was faith in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man; that, essential in the life of Jesus, was a sublime realization of this faith. The true Christianity, they therefore hold, is in the enlarging and deepening consciousness of this faith and in its wider and purer realization in life, wherever manifest in the course of the history of mankind. In

fact, many Unitarians have accepted, as only adequate, a definition of Unitarianism as the free and progressive development of Christianity which aspires to to be synonymous with universal ethics and universal religion.

The mission of the American Unitarian Association to Japan has been established for the purpose of presenting to the Japanese people, Christianity, as the universal Gospel of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man, apprehended and realized in the faith and life of Jesus the Christ, illustrated and extended by Divine Providence in History, and confirmed by maturing Philosophy and Science.

In the preparation of this little book, I have gathered material from many stores, most of which have been acknowledged by name. I am especially indebted to the writings of Dr. Joseph H. Allen formerly of the Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, Mass., Prof. Alexander, V. G. Allen of the Episcopal Theological School of Harvard University, Prof. Crawford H. Toy of the Harvard Divinity School, and Dr. James Martineau of England, for several facts and suggestions uncredited.

With the hope that these pages may serve, not only to guard Unitarianism from mistaken criticism, but, also, to make clear the forward

movement of Christianity in History, particularly in its successively higher expressions of that which has been called the "Faith of the Incarnation," I commend what is here written, to the people of Japan.

CLAY MACCAULEY.

UNITARIAN MISSION,
TOKYO, JAPAN.

Dec. 15. 1891.

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We had not walked
But for Tradition. We walk evermore
To higher paths by brightening Reason's lamp.

George Eliot.

There shall rise from this confused sound of voices
A firmer faith than that our fathers knew,
A deep religion which alone rejoices
In worship of the Infinitely True ;
Not built on rite or portent, but a finer
And purer reverence for a Lord diviner.

Lewis Morris.

I.

THE PERSON OF JESUS IN BIBLE AND CHURCH.

The Christ Christendom worships is no pure historic person, but in part a creation of the human mind. Glory of Greek myth through John's Gospel flows in to fill out the Synoptic figure of the other Evangelists into sublimity, and Paul is so entranced with the ideal Saviour of inward revelation that he does not want to see the actual one of flesh and blood. The Christ was born of wedded Greek and Jewish mind. I doubt not the depths of that immense Personality would justify more than all we can say. But the Personality is not constructible from any particulars of the story, without imaginative help. Christ is the increment of Jesus—the individual expanding an ideal.

Dr. Cyrus A. Bartol

THE PERSON OF JESUS IN BIBLE AND CHURCH.

THE Bishop of the Church of England in Japan, in his recent sermon on "The Faith of the Incarnation," withdrew from Unitarians the name Christian, asserting, as his reason for so doing, that Unitarians "deny that which alone makes the Christ to be the hope of men." "Think not" he urged, "to include within the Christian name those who deny the verities of the Faith."

What are these "verities of the Faith"?

"Even the belief that, at a definite term in history after long preparation by the Divine Providence, in a chosen nation and Holy Family, through her willing obedience on whom had rested the divine choice, 'the word was made Flesh and dwelt among us,' and that 'of His Fulness all we received.'

Consider these two principal statements separately. (1) 'The Word was made Flesh.' The Eternal Son of God who had lived during a past forever within the sphere of the Divine Being, a Person—for before creation personality alone was—the Son of the Father's love, who perfectly reflected and returned the love of which He was the object, Himself too the Divine Wisdom and Reason, in whom had been seen and imaged the thoughts of God about the things and men which were to be, so loved the world that at the fulness of the itme

He took our nature in its completeness, Body and Soul and Spirit, into His own, and became very God, very Man. His Deity indeed was veiled during the years of His Life on earth, and the use of its powers voluntarily foregone, in order that wholly like us, within the limitations of our nature, in perfect submission to the will of God the Holy Ghost, and like His own prophets, working even His miracles by the Spirit's power, He might live and be tempted and suffer and die. Thus His life became our example and his present sympathy springs out of a true human experience; but none the less for this condescension was He essentially divine—not a man raised to the rank of Deity, but God who has stooped to assume humanity.

(2) "This is the first part of the truth, and the other words which I have quoted are its due complement—'of His Fulness all we received.' Not for Himself alone, though the world shows forth His glory, did He create it. Not for Himself alone, though it were in the execution of an eternal purpose, did He assume our nature. The Church is the extension of the Incarnation, the Body of Christ. By that Holy Spirit, in and through whom He lived His earthly life, He has united it to Himself, and in Himself to the Father. 'Of His Fulness all we received,' says S. John, looking back to the quiet baptismal hour in which each of those around him—from the old man who had spent long years in the Master's service to the youngest Christian child in the congregation at Ephesus—had been received with the same sacred rite and words into the fellowship of Christ. And we may repeat without fear the same words to-day, as has each generation since, 'of His Fulness all we received.' All possess, all may use, if they will, the powers of the new regenerate life, which is theirs

in Christ. All are united by the bond of a common nature and new spiritual being with their one Lord. All, if they are true to Him, strive to reproduce the lineaments of character, the principles of the conduct, of which His own biographies are the record. All find new springs of strength in fellowship with Him and in Him with one another.

Such is the doctrine of our Lord's Incarnation and of its immediate purpose and issue."

What are the grounds of this Faith?

"First of all we believe it because we were taught it as the Church's Creed, and the first though not in all cases the last duty of men is to believe what they have been taught on sufficient authority. To hold a traditional Faith, a Faith which has come down to you, is no reproach in itself, though there are cases in which it becomes such. But with us it should be strong proof indeed which shook our hold on any article of the Faith which we have received. For what is the Creed but an epitome of the truths through the possession and belief of which the Church first came into being, and what is the Church regarded even externally but the great school of righteousness and goodness in the world, which uses as its instrument in the attainment of their greatest end, the truths with which it was entrusted? When, then, we Christians say that we believe our Creed because we were taught it, ours is no indolent plea in favour of our convictions being let alone, but rather it means this, that by God's kind Providence we find ourselves members of a great Society, through which we have learned the Faith, which it has held since its foundation, and which proves itself to us as it has to all who have preceded us, to be light and life. The burden of disproof does not lie with satisfied believers.

And if we wish to go further in stating the grounds of our belief, we should probably next betake ourselves to the familiar records of the words and works of our Lord himself. The claim which the Gospels make is practically no longer disputed. Unbelief has recognized it as well as faith. Unitarians no longer maintain, as a few years since, that the New Testament teaches Unitarianism."

This, then, is the statement by the Bishop of the Church of England in Japan, of what constitute "the verities of the Faith," and the grounds upon which they are to be accepted.

How far this statement is justified, by either Church history or the Christian records, I propose to examine. It will become evident, I believe, that neither authority supports it, in the sense in which it is here given; that it consequently does not fully express "the verities of the Faith;" and that in the disproof Unitarians may make of this statement, they are not thereby separating themselves from either Christ or the Christian Church.

I.

The Christology of the New Testament.

But first, concerning the charge that Unitarians no longer maintain that the New Testament teaches the faith which gives them their dominational name, I wish to say, Dr. Bickersteth has been misinformed, or, he wholly misunderstands the writings of our representative scholars. I am well acquainted with Unitarian literature, and do not know of one of its writers who admits that, either

the doctrine of the Trinity or of the Deity of Jesus Christ, considered as God the Son, differentiated from and yet co-equal with God the Father, is taught or even supported by the Christian scriptures. The representatives of Unitarian scholarship are *en rapport* with the most exact and devout Biblical criticism and exegesis. They are dedicated to the service of the truth. They are consecrated to discovering as far as can be known, just what may be held as Christian doctrine. But their work has not yet induced one of them to give over the teachings of the New Testament to Trinitarianism. Our critic will, of course, admit that the Unitarian scholars of former days were anti-trinitarian as Biblical interpreters. The attitude of their successors of the present day, supported by a more intelligent and thorough interpretation of the Christian records, has not been changed.

I could quote the testimony of many expositors among us, but it will suffice for me to summarize their conclusions.

The New Testament, composed of records of the origin and beginnings of the "Gospel of Jesus Christ," is concentrated around the person and work of Jesus. These records are demonstrated to have been not contemporaneous; nor are they homogeneous in the purport of their contents. They present the Person of Jesus as modified by contact with the varying modes of thought of wide-

ly separated and differently circumstanced bodies of disciples, through a period extending over more than a century. These presentations of the personality of Jesus of Nazareth appear in a gradation of dignity from that of the esteem of the Jew for a Rabbi, to that of the divine ascription in the Proem to the Fourth Gospel. But, nowhere among them, do Unitarian scholars discover the elevation of Jesus, even as the Christ, to Deity as the Second Person in an Eternal Trinity. That was an act of faith subsequent to the writing of any of the books of the Bible.

Unitarian exegetes, in common with other scientific interpreters of the Scriptures, find in the New Testament, at least four separable, and, in large part, separated, theories of the Person of Jesus of Nazareth.

1.—Humanity, endowed with wonder-working power.

2.—Humanity, divinely ordained and exalted as Messiah of the Jews.

3.—Humanity, in which the Son of God, as spiritual Messiah, had appeared, and which, after death, had been by divine power raised again to life, and transferred to Heaven as "the Last Adam," and Head of a new and divine Humanity.

4th.—Humanity, in which the Divine Logos had become incarnate.

The first two of these theories were characteristic of the popular Judaism of Galilee and Judea.

They were prevalent throughout the life of Jesus. The second of them received its consummate expression in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost.

1.—The first theory was that of the fellow townsmen of Jesus and of the Jews generally. It was embodied in such inquiries as, "Whence hath this man this wisdom and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? Whence then hath this man all these things?," and in the declaration of the multitude at the time he made his triumphal entrance into Jerusalem, just before his crucifixion, "This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth."

2.—Among the chosen disciples of Jesus, however, belief in him as a man was noticeably more and more modified by a long held, absorbing, national Messianic hope. With wavering fidelity they concentrated this hope upon him during his life. After his death it persisted among them, at first feebly, but with increasing strength and transfigured meaning, until on the Day of Pentecost it received full endorsement in the notable address of the Apostle Peter, and became thenceforward the distinguishing faith of the Judaic Christians. This second theory of the Person of Jesus, as set forth in the Pentecostal address, is, "Ye men of Israel hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs which God did by Him: Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and

foreknowlege of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain ; whom God hath raised up. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted—let all Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." This theory pervades and dominates the first three Gospels. Examining these records, we find that, from the time of the journey of the Magi to the manger at Bethlehem to see "Him who was born King of the Jews," to the very last moment of the Christ's intercourse with his disciples at the "Ascension" when the Apostles asked Him, "Lord wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel?" this theory was the controlling force of apostolic discipleship. And even after the "Ascension" the apostles waited in expectation of a speedy return of the ascended Messiah to place them on "twelve thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel," in the Kingdom from Heaven.

3.—But, the New Testament records are not confined to setting forth the Palestinian doctrine of the Person of Jesus. Christianity at length came to have a larger reach than Judaism and the Jewish Messianic hope. An ideal for all humanity, issuing from faith in Jesus Christ, sprang into being and found a fervent advocate in a Hellenistic Jew, Saul of Tarsus, who, as Paul the Apostle, made the Christ known to the world. The Pauline theory of the Christ shapes a large

part of the Christian scriptures. It is no longer that of "the Son of Man." This phrase does not occur once in Paul's writings. In these, Jesus has become the glorified Lord in heaven, who "born of the seed of David according to the flesh, had been declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection of the dead" Yet more than this was embodied in the Pauline Christology. Jesus Christ was the Son of God in the spirit, descended among men, a "Last Adam," the progenitor of a new order of Humanity, or rather the "first born among many brethren," who after his work on the earth had been done had returned to the Heaven whence he had been sent. "God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that He might redeem them that were under the law." "Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men." The earthly life of Jesus was thus looked upon as but an event in his existence. The Pauline theology culminated in such passages as this, "To us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things and we unto Him, and one Lord Jesus Christ through whom are all things and we through Him."

I need not amplify these three theories of the Person of Jesus which Unitarian and most scientific Biblical students of the present day, find in the

New Testament. It is evident, however, that none of these doctrines is Trinitarian in content or tendency. In none of them is Jesus set forth as God the Son. In the Petrine theory of the Christ, a man is ordained to, and is elevated to, kingly and celestial power and glory. In the Pauline theory, the Son of God, "the first born of every creature," takes upon himself human nature, that thereby an old and outworn order of human life might be destroyed and that mankind might, by means of their connection with Christ, rise through the death of the flesh, redeemed spirits, children of God with Christ, their Elder Brother.

II.

The Christology of the New Testament: the Logos Doctrine.

Unitarian scholars see a fourth theory of the Person of Jesus Christ enshrined in the New Testament. It is that whose fullest expression is made in the Fourth Gospel, the theory of Christ as the incarnate Divine Logos. Bishop Bickersteth's Sermon had for its motive, the texts, "The Logos was made flesh," and "of his Fulness all we received," both passages quoted from the first chapter of the "Gospel according to S. John." To Dr. Bickersteth, the first of these passages sets forth the orthodox faith, that God the eternal Son, the Second Person of the Divine Trinity, assumed human nature in the man Jesus of Nazareth. This faith he presents as the fundamental

verity of Christianity. This, he asserts, Unitarians deny, thereby severing themselves from Christ's name and from Christ's body, the Church. This, he claims, Unitarians acknowledge to be the true New Testament doctrine, thereby surrendering the Christian scriptures, as no longer a stronghold for their own defense.

I reply: Unitarians do not accept the Christology of Trinitarianism; but, in not accepting it, they in no measure admit that they deny any fundamental verity of Christian faith; and they see no reason whatever for deserting the New Testament as no longer untrinitarian in its teachings.

I cannot admit that the passage which Bishop Bickersteth selected as the motive to his appeal, weakens the position Unitarians have taken. Unitarian Biblical expositors do not ignore the doctrine of the Christ as the incarnate Divine Logos. On the contrary, they have studied it long and reverently, only to come to the conclusion, however, that the Logos becoming flesh, is very different from the incarnation of the Second Person of a Triune God.

4.—What is the New Testament doctrine of the incarnate Logos? It is the culmination of that process of the idealization of the Person of Jesus Christ, which took place in the Christian consciousness during the first century after the death of Jesus. The successive degrees of this idealization

are quite clearly set forth in the New Testament. I have indicated what they were. We have seen how the man Jesus of Nazareth became identified in the minds of the Palestinian, Jewish Christians with the divinely ordained Messiah, long hoped for by the nation. This is the Christ of the first three Gospels. We have seen, too, how the man Jesus was transfigured, as the Son of God sent from Heaven, to be the spiritual Messiah for both Jew and Gentile, and who had become through death and resurrection, "the Last Adam," the Head of a new and divine Humanity. This is the Christ of the Pauline epistles and of many Hellenized Jews. But still another, higher, degree was possible for the advancing Christology, before the writings which were at length included in the New Testament were all composed, the sublime faith of the Fourth Gospel; Christ set forth as the Logos incarnate.

Unitarians, with most of the scientific historians and Biblical critics of modern times, can see plainly how the Logos doctrine, the highest theme of the theological speculations of the Alexandrian Jews of the first Christian century, became associated with the spreading faith in the "glorified Christ." To understand this doctrine and the use made of it in shaping Christian faith, is to understand the consummation of the faith of early Christendom in the Person of Jesus, so far as the Christian scriptures are concerned. What occur-

red farther in the development of the doctrine of Christ's Person, as, for example, his incorporation into a Divine Trinity as its Second Person, is a theme in the study of Church History, not of New Testament exegesis.

What, then, was the Logos doctrine? We shall glance at its central contents. Philo, an Alexandrian Jew, born just before the Christian era, who became the representative of the Logos doctrine as it was received into Christianity, taught, under the influence of a speculation quite common at the time in both the Greek and Roman philosophies, that God is absolute spirit, having no contact with matter, and that intermediary between Him and the world is the Word, the Logos. Philo's wide reaching work was the application of this speculation to the Jewish theology, and to Old Testament history. He profoundly influenced Jewish thought outside of Palestine, especially that of Northern Egypt and of Southern Asia Minor. To many Jews the idea gradually became familiar and commonplace, that, between the absolute God and man and the world, there is, and in their national history had been, an intermediary being, the Logos, the Word of Jehovah, the only begotten Son, the image and agent of the only true God and Father, in contact with both extremes, the Divine and the Human.

Philo did not identify the Logos with Jesus Christ or with any man. That was not done until

the growing Church had come under the influence of the Alexandrian philosophy, or that of Alexandrian Jews who had become Christian believers. Towards the end of the first hundred years after the death of Jesus the Logos doctrine appeared in Christian writings. We see it in certain New Testament books, the Epistles to the Ephesians, to the Colossians and to the Hebrews. It reached its full declaration, however, in the Fourth Gospel. Excepting its association with the Person of Christ, the Logos doctrine of this Gospel is substantially that of Philo. Philo taught that the Logos is from the beginning, not eternal in the sense that God is eternal, but deriving his being from God his Father; the only begotten Son; the divine manifestation of God; Maker and Lord of all things, yet always under the control of the only one God; the Son having the glory of the Father; the one source of life and salvation. These ascriptions might as easily be taken from the Fourth Gospel and the Logos epistles, which are ascribed to the Apostle Paul, where Christ is presented as the image of the invisible God; the one through whom all things were made and by whom they consist; in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and who is seated at the right hand of God.

Now, granting all that may be legitimately claimed for the transcendent exaltation of the Jewish Logos, evidently the distinction of superior

and subordinate steadily persists between the absolute God and Him. Unitarian Biblical students see a like relationship between the Father and Christ the Word. We cannot surrender the Christian Scriptures to Trinitarianism. I refer by way of illustration of our position, to two representative writers, Prof. Toy of Harvard University in America, and Dr. James Martineau of England. Prof. Toy is not denominationally a Unitarian ; as for intellectual attitude, however, he stands just where we are.

Prof. Toy says : "The New Testament, with all the grandeur of character and function that it ascribes to Christ, maintains the unique supremacy of the One God. The demand for a mediating power between God and Humanity is pushed to the farthest point which thought can occupy, consistently with the maintenance of the absoluteness of the one supreme Deity." Dr. Martineau, speaking of the incarnate Logos, says : "The Son, whether originated in time or not, is intrinsically subordinate to the Father. The initiation is ever with the Father as absolute Cause, the effect only with the Son as agent relatively to the world. The divine 'Word' cannot speak save what the divine thought may give Him to say. He does not come of himself, but is no less sent into the world than the disciples whom He commissions as His ambassadors in turn. Even in this high and mystic doctrine, the co-equality variously gives

way. The relation (of Father and Son) cannot be turned round; and though the Son is of the Supreme essence, the Father preoccupies and forever keeps, the name of the 'true God' and is the invisible perfection which the Word is commissioned to manifest."

But I have said enough, I think, to make it clear that Bishop Bickersteth thoroughly misunderstands Unitarians when he asserts that they long ago gave up the Christian scriptures to anti-unitarianism and orthodox Christianity. The Christian scriptures are an heritage which Unitarianism has received in common with all Christendom. Our effort to understand these scriptures is as earnest and as reverent as that of any other body of Christian disciples. Our Unitarianism is in large part a direct effect of this study. To many of us it is scarcely credible that an unprejudiced mind can find the doctrine of the Trinity in the Bible, even by implication. History shows how and when the doctrine of the Trinity appeared in Christendom. We know that it appeared long after the Sacred Canon had closed. It was the final act of the idealizing faith of the early Church, the steps of which, to the theory of the incarnation of the Logos, are plainly marked in the New Testament, and have been pointed out here.

III.

The Christology of Unitarianism.

There remains to me the duty of making a state-

ment of the theory of the Person of Jesus Christ, commonly held by Unitarians. When, however, I say "commonly held," I do not mean either universally, or always, held. The theories of Christ's Person advocated by Unitarians, are the same universally and have always been the same, only in their denial of the doctrine that in Jesus Christ, the Second Person of a Divine Trinity was incarnate. In the history of our denomination we find as many differing theories of the Person of Jesus of Nazareth as there are in the New Testament scriptures, from the simple humanitarianism of the village associates of Jesus, to the transcendent Logos incarnation dominant among the philosophic Christians of Alexandria. At the present day this same wide range of opinion may be found among the members of our churches. But it is also true, that among those who may be now considered representative teachers, who are most influential in directing Unitarian thought, there is an increasing harmony of opinions concerning Jesus, of so wide an inclusion, that we may say it expresses the Christology commonly held among us.

What is the Christology of Modern Unitarianism? It is not that of the Roman Catholic and of Orthodox Christians, nor that of the Fourth Gospel, nor that of the Pauline Epistles, nor that even of the Synoptic Gospels. Yet it is in no degree inferior to any of these. As the Christian con-

sciousness of each succeeding century in early Christian history, was impelled to define the Person of Jesus Christ anew, so has it been in this Modern Age. Among Unitarians, the advancing apotheosis of Jesus as the Christ, has been carried yet farther forward, and, possibly, to an ultimate position.

All Unitarians would agree with Bisop Bickersteth's answer to his question, "What is it that the most devout and religious minds in all times and lands have longed for, and striven to reach and grasp? Is it not some true, some satisfying mode of union with and likeness to God?" The record, in so large part, of patient, earnest, often vehement and passionate, search of Unitarian Christians for God; a search, often persisted in through persecution, shame and death, for one who shall be known to be "God with man," shows how deeply this longing of the ages has been felt among them. They make a radical mistake, who say that we seek to destroy any real bond by which faith has brought God and man together. Unitarianism has come not to destroy but to fulfill. We have denied the doctrine of the incarnation, in Jesus of Nazareth, of the Second Person of a Divine Trinity. But we have denied it for, substantially the same reason as that by which the Church Fathers of the third and the fourth centuries, the creators of the Christian Trinity, were compelled to deny the doctrine of the incarnation of the divine Logos

which they had inherited from the Church of the second century; we have denied it in the same spirit with which the earlier Church rose above the Christology of the Apostle Paul to that of the Logos doctrine; for the same reason as that by which the Apostle Paul advanced his thought of the Christ beyond that of the Apostle Peter and of the Jerusalem Jews; the reason, namely, that the irrepressible longing of the human soul for immediate, conscious union with God, was not yet satisfied.

"But Unitarianism is Humanitarianism," it will be charged in reply. "To Unitarians, Jesus Christ is not God but man." Yet, to us, he is no more really a man than he is in Trinitarian Christology, properly understood and taught. In all orthodox creeds Jesus Christ is presented as, in a true sense of the word, human. It is one of the memorable achievements of the Catholic and Orthodox theology, that it has invariably taught the proper and complete humanity of Jesus. The repeated struggles of the early Christian Church to preserve this article of faith, are among the most instructive of its records. The Manichaean heresy, that of Apollinaris, and that of Eutiches, which were condemned by general councils in the fourth and fifth centuries, because they taught, respectively, that the humanity of Jesus was a mere illusion, that Jesus had no human soul, and that the divine nature in Christ wholly absorbed

the human, are significant illustrations of the faithfulness of the Church to the reality of the humanity of Jesus. The Orthodox creed sets forth the doctrine of the incarnation of God the Son in Jesus, but it teaches, as clearly as Unitarians teach, Jesus Christ's real nature as man. So far as belief in the man Jesus is in question, Orthodox Christians and Unitarians stand together.

"But Unitarianism is mere Humanitarianism," it may be answered. "To Unitarians, God was not incarnate in the man Jesus." Yet, we claim that the mark of Christian discipleship is the faith of the incarnation. Unitarians find their deepest inspiration, their sublimest hope in this faith. The real difference between Orthodox and Unitarian Christians arises from the difference beween two definitions or explanations of the same idea. Back of the Orthodox and the Modern Unitarian conceptions of the Incarnation, lie fundamentally unlike thoughts of Deity, and of God's relation to man and the world. Orthodoxy had its source in a thought of God which assumed a separation between Deity and man and nature, not only by spiritual essence, but also by distances of space. To illustrate; the Christianity of the Apostolic Church started from the Jewish popular notion that God had, from the distant heavens, ordained Jesus to be the Messiah of His chosen people, and had endowed him with superhuman powers by His Spirit, to complete the Messianic mission.

But, when Christianity was carried beyond the bounds of Jewish life and thought, the Christian mind, under a profounder theology than that of the Palestinian disciples, began a struggle concerning the Person of Christ, which continued with deepening intensity for more than four hundred years. The Pauline Christology, which set forth Jesus as the incarnation of the Son of God, the first born of all the creation, was a great advance upon the faith which had preceded it. The Apostle himself was influenced by the contemporary Greco-Roman speculation, which affirmed that there is an essential connection between God and man, the God "in whom we live and move and have our being," yet the Christology of Paul's epistles was not wholly freed from the current dualistic conceptions of Judaism. The Logos doctrine of the Fourth Gospel was still farther a movement towards emancipation of Christian faith. But it was not until the Fathers of the Church of the third and fourth centuries had wrought the enlarging and deepening faith in the Christ into the doctrine of the Trinity, that the real doctrine of the God-man, the "true God" who had assumed human nature, became a part of Christian consciousness. The doctrine of the Trinity itself bears witness to the struggle in the Christian Church for a satisfying statement of the Incarnation. In substance, it is a product of the Greek philosophic conviction, that "the true God" is immanent in

the world and in man. In form, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, although set forth as One God in three Persons, it bears the marks of the antecedent, unsatisfying faiths whose place it had taken. Dr. James Freeman Clarke said, "No doctrine of Orthodoxy is so false in its form, and so true in its substance, as this." Again, speaking of the doctrine of the deification of Christ, as embodied in Orthodox creeds, this same writer remarked, "We cannot but think this doctrine far truer than the Arianism which so long struggled in the Church for supremacy."

The development of the theory of Christ's Person, however, received, soon after the confirmation of the doctrine of the Trinity, a check which lasted for more than a thousand years. With the establishment of the Roman Papacy, and the domination of the Augustinian theology, the influence of the Greek idea of the immanence of God in man and the world gave way. Christian thought was thenceforward shaped by dogma based upon the notion of God's absolute transcendence in relation to the human soul. The doctrine of the Trinity remained, but it lost its real motive and reason for being. The humanity of Christ practically disappeared, obscured by his awful Deity.

No change for the better in the theory of Christ's Person took place until the Renaissance had made the thought of Christendom free again. A large number of the Reformed churches perpet-

uated in Calvinism, the Augustinian theology and Christology, but many earnest Christians protested against the continued dominance of the Medieval dogmas. The Unitarian protests, which soon followed the Reformation, were a return to one or another of the New Testament theories of Christ's Person. The Socinian struggles of the seventeenth century and later, were often made in the interests of a barren humanitarianism; nevertheless they were aroused by a legitimate claim upon the humanity of Christ, which had been practically taken from Christian faith. The Socinians did a much needed work in clearing the way for the advance of a truer Christology.

During the present century a large part of Protestant Christendom has been brought, by a free philosophy and science, under the influence of a mode of thought very like that of the Greek Fathers of the fourth century. In many directions Christian theology has thereby been becoming more and more satisfying to both intellectual and spiritual needs. The doctrine of the Trinity is still a fundamental tenet of Orthodox Christian faith, but it has been brought back from the isolation it had in the Middle Ages, and, in one or another form, been put into vital connection with Christian faith. At least, what is vital in the doctrine of the Trinity has been put into intimate contact with Christian faith. The sermon of Bishop Bickersteth, which has called forth this

reply, is, itself, an illustration of my meaning.

Modern Unitarianism, as I have said, does not seek to perpetuate the Patristic Trinity, or the Christology involved in it. We see great beauty and truth in a doctrine of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, but, to us, there is only "one God, the Father." Modern Unitarianism is guided by the conviction that there is only one God, and that God is immanent in the Universe; its Source, Power, Life, Providence, and End. Our Christology therefore is, that so far as God was incarnate in Jesus, He was incarnate in him, in no way essentially different from that of his incarnation in all human souls. Whatever difference there was between Jesus and other men, we believe, was in the degree of the divine communion with him, not in its kind. To the faith of most of us, the consciousness of God in Christ reached an intensity-a dignity, a sublimity, which has made him the chief among men to whom we may turn as our Way, our Truth, our Life. It matters not that the Christian records vary in their conception and portrayal of the Man of Nazareth. Jesus, we believe, still stands before the world as the greatest of all the prophets of the soul. It has been well said that "only a Christ could invent a Christ." It is not the historic Christ who has ruled the Church, who now receives the homage of men's souls, and who will guide mankind hereafter. It is the ideal Christ, the result of the impression

which Jesus made upon his contemporaries, and of the transfiguration of that impression by those who have drawn inspiration from the New Testament records. Dr. F. H. Hedge wrote, "If the Christ of the Church, of Christian faith, is an ideal being, it was Jesus of Nazareth who made the ideal. The ideal in him is simply the result of that disengagement from the earthly vestiture, which death and distance work in all who live in history. By the very necessity of its function history idealizes. We misread the Gospel and reverse the true and divine order, if we suppose the ideal Christ to be an essence distilled from the historical. On the contrary, the ideal Christ is the root and ground of the historical; and without the antecedent idea inspiring, commanding, the history would never have been."

From what has been given to the world of the career of Jesus of Nazareth, there has been evolved for many earnest minds the personality of one in whom the consciousness of God, the Father, became supreme; of his God who is also our God, of his Father who is also our Father; and who thereby gave to man "a true, satisfying mode of union with and likeness to God." "In the very constitution of the human soul," says Dr. Martineau, "there is provision for an immediate apprehension of God. But often in the transient lights and shades of conscience we pass on and know not *who* it is; and not until we see in another the victory

which shames our defeat, and are caught up by an enthusiasm for some realized heroism or sanctity, do the authority of right and the beauty of holiness come home to us as an appeal literally Divine. The train of the conspicuously righteous in their several degrees are for us the real angels that pass to and fro on the ladder that reaches from earth to heaven. And if Jesus of Nazareth in virtue of the characteristics of his spirit, holds the place of Prince of Saints and perfects the conditions of the pure religious life, he thereby reveals the highest possibilities of the human soul and their dependence on habitual communion between man and God."

The Christology of Unitarianism, therefore, directs us to the Man of Nazareth, not as dominated by an indwelling celestial, or super-angelic, spirit, nor even as possessed by the eternal Son of God, incarnate in him, made thereby the bond between a separated Humanity and Deity, but as so conscious of "the true God" within, that he is the prototype of a Divine Humanity; illuminating by his faith and life, the essential Fatherhood of God, and anticipating the possible consious divine childship of every human soul.

II.

EVOLUTION AND METAMORPHOSES OF CHRISTIANITY.

Historically regarded, Jesus is uplifted on the great wave formed by the confluence of three main courses of ancient life and thought, the Hebrew, Oriental, and Greek,—all embraced in the imperial sway of Rome. His life, as the fulfillment of Hebrew Messianic prophecy, becomes the central and pivotal fact in the annals of mankind. However it be interpreted, the doctrine of the Church remains, that in it met all the separate threads of human development: so that, religiously regarded, it becomes the great revelation of God in human life.

Dr. Joseph H. Allen.

What we call Christianity is a vast ocean, into which flow a number of spiritual currents of distant and various origin; certain religions, that is to say, of Asia and Europe, the great ideas of Greek wisdom, and especially those of Platonism. What is essential and original in it is the practical demonstration that the human and the divine nature may co-exist, may become fused into one sublime flame. What is specific in Christianity is Jesus—the religious consciousness of Jesus. The sacred sense of his absolute union with God, through perfect love and self-surrender, this profound, invincible, and tranquil faith of his has become a religion.

Henri Frederic Amiel.

GLIMPSES OF THE EVOLUTION AND METAMORPHOSES OF CHRISTIANITY.

THE FIRST CENTURY.

1. Primitive Christianity in Contemporary History. *Tacitus. A.D.* 54-117.—The Roman historian Tacitus, who, it is said, ranks "beyond dispute in the highest place among men of letters in all ages," was born about the middle of the first century of the Christian Era. In his *Annals*, he speaks of the attempt of the emperor Nero, to divert from himself the odium which befell him as the suspected cause of the great fire in Rome, by accusation of the new and increasing religious sect, "commonly known as Christians."

"The originator of this name," wrote Tacitus, "was one Christus, who was put to death as a criminal, under the procurator Pontius Pilate, in the reign of Tiberius."

2. The Beginnings of Christianity. Jesus of Nazareth. *The Synoptic Gospels*; *The Acts of the Apostles. A.D.* 30-125?—Within the first hundred and twenty five years after the birth of Jesus of Nazareth, what are now known as the Synoptic Gospels,—Matthew, Mark, and Luke,—

and the Acts of the Apostles, came into existence. According to them, the first explicit public claim which Jesus made concerning himself, was in the synagogue at "Nazareth where he had been brought up." There he "stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.'

"And he began to say unto them, 'This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.' And all bore him witness and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, 'Is not this Joseph's son?'" (Luke 4:16-22). Upon this announcement at Nazareth Jesus devoted himself to a public ministry of religious teaching and of wonderful deeds in Galilee and Judea, continuing for from one to three years.

At last, betrayed by one of his chosen followers, Jesus was arrested at Jerusalem, and taken before the Jewish Council, where he was asked, "If thou art the Christ, tell us. But he said, 'If I tell you, ye will not believe.' And they all said, 'Art thou then the Son of God?' And he said, 'Ye

say that I am.' And the whole company of them rose up and brought him before Pilate," where he was accused of having called himself, "Christ, an anointed king." "And Pilate asked him, 'Art thou the king of the Jews?' He answered 'Thou sayest.'"

Jesus was crucified as, "The King of the Jews." (Luke 22, and 23).

3. The Glorified Messiah of Israel. *The Day of Pentecost. About A.D.* 30.—In the "Acts of the Apostles," it is recorded that the disciples of Jesus, and devout Jews "from every nation under heaven," came together on the Day of Pentecost, not long after the crucifixion. At that time the Apostle Peter "stood up with the eleven," and made this proclamation ;—

"Ye men of Israel, hear these words : Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know; him being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men, did crucify and slay.—This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses. Being therefore at the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear.—Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this

Jesus whom ye crucified."

4. The Baptismal Formula. A.D. 30-125. —At the close of the Pentecostal address, so the record runs, many "were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren what shall we do?" The answer was, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

Throughout the first century, baptism "in the name of Christ," or "in the name of the Lord" (Acts 10: 48), or "in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 19: 5), or "into Christ" (Gal. 3: 27), was, apparently, the one simple formula used for entrance into membership in the Christian Church. It is supposed that one of the notable marks of an early metamorphosis of the Person of Jesus, lies in the baptismal formula embodied in the closing words of "the Gospel according to S. Matthew," where the ascending Jesus declares to the eleven; "all authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." (Mat. 28: 19). By the time the Synoptic Gospels had received their permanent form, about A. D. 100-125?, the historic Christ had thus already become transformed and idealized.

5. The Christ of the Spirit. The Pauline Epistles. A.D. 53-63.—In the epistles of Paul, we

have, in original and completed form, the earliest of the Christian records. In doctrine, excepting the baptismal formula at the close of Matthew, there is in these epistles a much higher Christology than we find in the Synoptic Gospels. Paul wrote his most important letters, within thirty years after the Crucifixion.

While called Saul of Tarsus, "breathing threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord," commissioned by the high priest to bring bound to Jerusalem any of the Damascus Jews "that were of the Way," Paul became, himself, a Christian disciple, and "straightway," among those whom he had been persecuting, "proclaimed Jesus that He is the Son of God." (Acts 9 : 20). Thenceforth, Paul, consecrated his life to the Gospel of the Christ, and did more than any other one man to make Christianity a religion of the Spirit, and a faith and life for mankind. But it was not the Jesus of Nazareth "who went about doing good," to whom Paul consecrated his great powers. It was to the "Son of God," "born of the seed of David according to the flesh and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead." (Rom. 1:1-6). "We preach Christ crucified," (1 Cor. 1:23), Paul announced, "determined not to know anything, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." (1 Cor. 2 : 2). "Even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we

know him so no more. If any man is in Christ he is a new creature.' (2 Cor. 5:16).

In the Pauline Christology the Jewish Messiah disappeared. "To us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things and we unto Him: and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and we through Him. (1 Cor. 8: 6).

To the Apostle to the Gentiles a spiritual Messiah had been revealed. "As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. 15:22). "The first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is of heaven." (1 Cor. 15: 45-48). To Paul's faith, through the coming of the Son of God into the world a conscious divine humanity, a humanity of the Spirit, had been created. "God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that he might redeem them which were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba Father." (Gal. 4: 4-7). A new covenant of God with man had been made, "not of the letter but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." "Ye died and your life is hid with Christ in God." (Col. 3: 3).

Once Paul associated in an apostolic act, God, the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost; in the benediction with which his Second Epistle to the

Corinthians closed.

The culmination of the Pauline Christology is reached in the introduction to the Epistle to the Colossians, which, whether or not from the pen of the Apostle, is thoroughly in harmony with the tendency and steady development of his thought.—"Thanks unto the Father," he writes, "who delivered us out of the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love, who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation; for in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist. It was the good pleasure of the Father that in him should all the fulness dwell."

If, as is supposed, the letter to the Colossians was written in the year 62, Jesus of Nazareth, who on the Day of Pentecost had been proclaimed "a man approved of God," and exalted to a heavenly seat as the Lord and Christ of Israel, had, within less than a generation afterwards, become, to a part of the growing Church, an incarnated superangelic spirit, God's agent in all Creation, Providence and Destiny.

6. The Epistle to the Hebrews. A.D. 60-70.—A yet farther degree in the New Testament metamorphosis of the Person of Christ was

reached. Competent critics are inclined to the opinion that this epistle was not written by Paul, but by some one who had accepted the Pauline Christology, and, by it, sought to exalt the Christ ideal among the Jewish Christians to a like level with that presented to the Gentiles. In the opening of the "Epistle to the Hebrews," we read, "God having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds: who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; having become by so much better than the angels, as he hath inherited, a more excellent name than they."

Just when this epistle was written we do not know. Christologically however it brings us to the boundary, to cross which discloses the sublime vision with which the Fourth Gospel opens.

7. *Clement of Rome.* *A.D.* 95.—One other voice speaks to us from the first century, as the century closes, that of the bishop of the Church at Rome. It has not the rapt, mystic tone of the aged Paul, longing to depart and be with Christ, but it exalts before the Church at Corinth, "The sceptre of the majesty of God, our Lord Jesus

Christ, who came not in the show of pride and arrogance, though he could have done so; but with humility, as the Holy Ghost had before spoken concerning him."

THE SECOND CENTURY.

1. The Apostolic Fathers. *Polycarp,* 69-140?—With the exception of the Epistle to the Corinthians, from the pen of Clement of Rome, there is but one other writing of the Church Fathers who had been contemporary with any of the Apostles, which can now be accepted as genuine,—the letter of Polycarp to the Philippians. Polycarp's ideal of the Christ, however, hardly rises to the level of that of the Apostle Paul. He believes "on Him that raised up our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead and hath given him glory and a throne at his right hand." He had often talked "with John and the rest who had seen the Lord." Polycarp is supposed to have been born in the year 69. He suffered martyrdom near the middle of the second century.

2. Christ the Divine Logos. *The Fourth Gospel,* 130-150.—Towards the middle of the second century appeared the most momentous,—considered in its Christology,—of all the writings which at last formed part of the Canon of the New Testament, "the Gospel according to S. John." This is a record of the life of Jesus, and is one of the four "Gospels" of the Christian scriptures.

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But, while it is grouped with "Matthew, Mark and Luke," it stands apart from them with an individuality which can not be ignored, or concealed. It is the embodiment of a new thought of Christ and his Gospel. It is the vision of the everlasting Logos incarnate.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.

"And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father) full of grace and truth.

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

As the visible life of Jesus drew to its close, "Philip saith unto him 'Lord shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us!' Jesus saith unto him, 'Have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father. Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in me? the words that I say unto you I speak not from myself, but the Father abiding in me doeth his works.'"

The Fourth Gospel closes with the words, "These are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name."

3. Conflict of Opinions; the Genesis of Creeds. *The Fathers of the Church.*—The first four

centuries of the Christian Era were the scene of a violent struggle among the recipients of Christian tradition, over the question of what is true or false doctrine. It is not the purpose here, however, to attempt an exhibit of the complex contest. At times it was a struggle of all the churches against the world. At times it was the clash of party with party within the sacred fellowship. Opinion was many sided in its variety. It gathered chiefly about the Person of Christ. From the middle of the second century onward for two hundred years, there was no rest or steady progress in formulating doctrine. Faith was driven hither and thither under the impulses of contending sects, whose name was legion. To review this conflict would distract too much our attention. We shall notice in it, especially, the successive signs of the development of that doctrine which came at length to express for Christendom the Orthodox and Catholic faith concerning the Person of the Christ. This development had a substantial continuity, although at times it was arrested and seemingly also, for a period, turned backward. By means of quotations from contemporary literature we shall gain instructive glimpses of the process.

4. Christ the Universal Logos, or Reason. *Justin, martyred* 165.—About the middle of the second century, Christianity appeared distinctly in contemporary history. Philosophers and other men of repute became interested in Christian doc-

trine. Dr. J. H. Allen, says, "Clearly throughout the New Testament, the leading idea is that Jesus was the Messiah of the Jews, in however spiritual fashion this office might be interpreted; and, so long as the Jewish nation existed, however feeble a remnant it might appear, the deliverance and glory of the chosen people under its Divine Leader would remain the central point of faith, at any rate with a large proportion of the disciples.—The Jewish nation was bloodily extinguished under Hadrian, in 135. Up to that date, it seems quite certain that there was a sect of Palestinian Christians who looked distinctly to see a restoration of the "Kingdom unto Israel," under the risen and triumphant Messiah. After that date, this hope was definitely blotted out, and the independent growth of Christian doctrine, as distinct from a more or less altered and spiritualized Judaism, may be said to have begun. The year 135 is to be taken, then, as the crisis which established Christian doctrine as an independent force in shaping the religious opinions of mankind."

Whether or not Justin wrote independently of the Fourth Gospel, we do not know, but what he said of the Logos was "probably *the first attempt* at a formal statement of the Logos-doctrine as a cardinal point in Christian theology; the Proem to the Fourth Gospel being an eloquent and noble *religious* expression of the

same general thought." "Justin's doctrine of the Word completes and follows out Paul's doctrine of the Spirit."

"Before all created things," wrote Justin in 140 (?), "God begot from himself a certain mighty Word, which is also called Holy Spirit, or Glory of the Lord, sometimes Son, sometimes Wisdom, sometimes Angel, sometimes God, and sometimes Lord or Word." "One article of our faith there is," he wrote again, "that Christ is the first begotten of God, and we have already proved him to be the very Logos, (or universal Reason), of which mankind are all partakers; and therefore those who live according to the Logos are Christians, notwithstanding they may pass with you for atheists." A more definite statement of his faith, one in which there is a noticeable juxtaposition of objects of worship was as follows:—"We worship and adore Him, (God), and the Son who came forth from Him and taught us these things, and the host of other angels who follow and are made like him, and the prophetic Spirit." Justin's Logos doctrine did not reach the sole exaltation to which in after decades it was carried, but it indicates the upward movement of Christian faith. Justin is thought to have been rather closer to the Jewish Roman line of thought than to the Greek.

5. The Germ of the Doctrine of the Trinity. *Athenagoras*, 176.—Athenagoras was an

Athenian philosopher, who wrote an Apology for the Christians, addressed to the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. He made this noteworthy declaration, "The Son is in the Father and the Father is in the Son, by oneness and power of the Spirit. The Son of God is the Mind and Reason of the Father."

6. The Germ of the Doctrine of the Supremacy of the Church. *Irenaeus*, 175-202.—Before the authority of the councils, assembled from the churches, was established, Christian thought was as individual and free as it is to-day. Each Christian writer legitimately supported his own doctrines, and had equal right with his fellow believers to a hearing from all. Irenaeus, however, ascribed supreme authority to the Church at Rome, as the true deposit of Apostolical succession, and of Christian faith. A glimpse through his writings at the growing faith, at least in the Western Churches, is given in his confession of belief, in "One God Almighty, of whom are all things, and in the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom are all things, and His dispensations by which the Son of God became man; also a firm trust in the Spirit of God who hath set forth the dispensations of the Father and the Son, dwelling with each successive race of men, as the Father willed."

THE THIRD CENTURY.

1. The Beginnings of Emphasis upon Personal Consciousness of Sin. *Tertullian, died* 220. A converted Roman lawyer, impressed by a vivid sense of the supremacy of law, Tertullian, at the opening of the third century, when national disasters of many kinds had made the popular mood morbid and despondent, gave especial attention to the fact of evil and the need of redemption. Yet, Neander says, "The same Tertullian who of all the Christian Fathers in the primitive age has most emphatically testified of the evil adhering to human nature and its need of redemption, has also expressed in the strongest terms the consciousness of the original ineffable alliance to the divine in human nature." "What notion the soul is able to form respecting its original Teacher," wrote this Father, "it is in thy power to judge from that soul that is within thee."

Tertullian's confession of faith is a clear mark of the rapidly defining Church Symbol. "The rule of faith is indeed altogether one, irremovable and irreformable;—One only God, omnipotent, the Maker of the Universe; and His Son Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, crucified under Pontius Pilate, raised again from the dead on the third day, received in the heavens, sitting now at the right hand of the Father, about to come to judge the quick and the dead, through the resurrection of the flesh as well (as of the spirit).

2. Further Evolution of the Logos Doctrine. Clement of Alexandria, 189–220.—Contemporay with Tertullian at Rome, was Clement at Alexandria, the "Father of Greek Theology." Uppermost in his thought, was Justin's idea of the immanence of the Divine Word in the world and in the human soul. Redemption, to him is the result of the education of the human race by the universal, indwelling Teacher. "The Teacher of ours, O my children, is like to His Father, *the* God, of whom He is the sinless Son,—God unpolluted though in human form, the Divine Word, He that is in the Father, He that is on the right hand of the Father and in His form divine." "Naturally is man dear to God, seeing that he is His handywork. Man, He wrought by His own hands, and infused into him something that belongs to Himself." "All men are his. Some with the consciousness of what He is to them, others not as yet; some as friends, others as faithful servants; others barely as servants." Faith in the indwelling God, as the incarnate Logos, is the source of all of Clement's hope for man's future, here and hereafter.

3. The Doctrine of the Logos, and the Eternal Generation of the Son. Origen, 186–254.—Whatever other contribution to the Patristic theology this successor of Clement made, he, certainly, carried the doctrine which became that of the Trinity, yet farther toward its full definition, by his attempt to reconcile his faith in

"the original and indestructible Unity of God," and his faith in "the essential divinity of the Logos." He evolved the doctrine of of the necessary eternal generation, by the divine Subject, the Father, of a divine Object, the eternal Son, the Logos. The speculations he thus started were epoch making for the next century and longer. Yet, as showing the changes which took place in his own mind, Origen at one time wrote: — "He who is God, *of himself*, is the God; for which reason he says in his prayer to the Father, that they may know Thee, the only true God; but whatever is God besides Him, being God only by a communication of his divinity, cannot so properly be called 'The God,' but rather 'A God.'"

4. The Doctrine of the Trinity taking Shape. *Novatian*, 250.—From the middle of third century to the time of the Council of Nicaea, the struggle concerning the permanent form, which Christian faith should take, grew more and more absorbing. That which became the Orthodox Creed was beset by heresies. The power of the Church at Rome steadily increased in the midst of the universal civil disorders then precipitated. From this period there remains, in a work on the "Trinity" by a Roman presbyter, who afterwards became an antipope, Novatian, the fragments of a creed which show how far, at Rome at least, Christian faith had been formulated. It required, "Faith in God the Father and Lord omnipotent

the most perfect Maker of all things; also in the Son of God, Christ Jesus *our Lord God*, but Son of God; also in the Holy Spirit."

THE FOURTH CENTURY.

1. The Orthodox Creed formulated and authorized. *The Council at Nicaea*, 325.—As the fourth century opened, the faith of the churches was profoundly disturbed by the contention of two powerful parties within the churches, known now as Sabellians and as Arians. The maturing faith in the Trinity was assailed on the one hand, by the advocates of a mystical belief in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as a trinity of divine attributes or manifestations, set forth by Sabellius. On the other hand, to save the Person of Christ from being thus absorbed in the Deity, Arius and his followers contended vehemently for the Christ's essential individuality, and His subordination to God, admitting, however, that Christ was of *like* substance with the Father, The Emperor Constantine, made emperor in 324, and having declared the empire Christian, determined, if possible, to put an end to this disastrous struggle, and to bring peace to the State and to the churches. He therefore summoned the first Œcumenical Council, which met the next year at Nicaea, near Constantinople.

The result of the debates in that Council, was the promulgation of a Creed which is the basis

of what is now known as the "Catholic" and "Orthodox" faith. In its original form it read as follows:—

"We believe in One God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things, both visible and invisible; and in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, (only begotten that is to say of the substance of the Father, God of God) and Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made, (both things in heaven and things on earth); who for us and for our salvation, came down and was made flesh, made man, suffered and rose again on the third day, went up into the heavens and is to come again to judge the quick and the dead; and in the Holy Ghost."

To this confession were added various anathemas of Arian doctrines, namely, that before the Christ "was begotten He was not;" that, "He came into existence from what was not;" and that, "He is of different Person or substance" from the Father.

But this creed did not bring the hoped for peace. For a half century afterwards, what is known as the "Arian Controversy" was waged fiercely.

Among the Orthodox adherents, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit was long a subject of bitter contention. The Nicene Creed declared faith simply

"in the Holy Ghost." But whence came the Holy Ghost? At Constantinople, in 381, it was established that, He "proceeded from the Father." At the same time the faith was confirmed, that the Holy Ghost, "with the Father and the Son," are worshipped and glorified. Belief also in "one Catholic and Apostolic Church; one baptism for the remission of sins; and expectation of the resurrection of the dead; and the life of the world to come," were made standard doctrine.

The Nicene Creed did not receive its finished form until in 589, when a council at Toledo in Spain, added the words "and the Son," to complete the Catholic doctrine of the procession of the Holy Ghost. This addition was never accepted by the Greek Church. But the Roman Church at length made it authoritative, and, in 1054, both the Greek and the Roman Churches excommunicated each other on account of their antagonism over this "*Filio-que*" clause.

2. The Basis of the "Apostles'" Creed. *The Creed of Marcellus*, 336.—Where and when the so-called Creed of the Apostles, came into being, is not known. In ideas it antedates the Nicene confession, but its unquestionable existence does not appear before the middle of the eighth century. It may, however, be taken as a fair embodiment of the faith which was formulated in the Roman churches of the early centuries, in contradistinction to the faith of the churches of

the Greek communion. The confession of Marcellus to the Bishop of Rome, is the earliest systematic approximation to the "Apostles' Creed." Marcellus had labored earnestly at Nicæa for the Orthodox party. Afterwards he opposed the Arians so strongly, that he was accused of Sabellianism. He was deposed, and, in self-justification, presented to the Head of the Roman Church, the following *Credo* :—

"I believe in God, the Father Almighty; and in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, our Lord, who was born of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary, who, under Pontius Pilate, was crucified and buried and on the third day rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father, whence He is coming to judge the quick and the dead; and in the Holy Ghost; the Holy Church; the remission of sins; the resurrection of the flesh; everlasting life." This faith, Marcellus said, "he learnt and was taught from the Holy Scriptures."

3. The Founder of Christian Catholicity. Athanasius, 296-373.—A true successor of Clement and of Origen, Athanasius rested his Christian faith on the immanence of God, and His manifestation as the eternal Reason. "This divine Logos," he wrote, "a being incorporeal, expands Himself in the universe as light expands in the air, penetrating all, and all entire, everywhere. He gives Himself without losing anything of Himself,

and with Him is given the Father who makes all by Him, and the Spirit who is His energy. In order to know God, He must be looked for within the soul. In order to know the way which leads to God and to take it with certainty, we have no need of foreign aid, but of ourselves alone. The kingdom of God is within us."

Applying this universal principle of the Divine Immanence to Christian tradition, Athanasius found the only satisfying solution for the problem before the Church, in the Unity in Trinity, of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

In this conviction, finally, the demands of the philosophy of the age, and the elements of Christian tradition, coalesced and issued in faith in a Triune God. The ideal of the Christ, as the Second Person of the Godhead, assumed into itself the Person of the Jesus of the Gospels. Christianity was thenceforth to unify both reason and tradition. Faith in the Son of God, and the principle of the Divine Immanence, were presented to the Church as in perfect harmony. Athanasius, when the work at Nicaea was finished, exultingly exclaimed ;—"The Word of the Lord which was given in the Œcumenical Council of Nicaea remaineth forever."

THE FIFTH CENTURY.

1. The Dogma of Original Sin and of Sacramental Grace. The Rise of the Church of Rome as Mediator between Christ and Man. *Augustine*, 355-430. — As we enter this century we see Christianity undergoing yet another transformation, which, in the end, was almost farther reaching in its effects, than the postulation of the Trinity of the Godhead. There appeared as advocate of the Catholic faith, Augustine, a converted disciple of Manichæan Dualism. He was eminently orthodox in his Christology. "Thy years are one day; Thy to-day is Eternity; therefore didst Thou beget the Coeternal, to whom Thou saidst 'This day have I begotten Thee.'" But, oppressed by a personal sense of sinfulness, and more or less prejudiced by his antecedent Manichæan conceptions of evil, evil, the origin of evil, and redemption, became the absorbing themes of his study and writings. In the Pelagian controversy, his emphasis upon the natural spiritual inability of man, confirmed, if it did not originate, a theory of human nature in which Christianity thitherto had had practically no interest, and which, thereafter, began to oppress Christendom. No other one mind has so profoundly pervaded the Christian Church, and shaped its views of the mutual relations of God and the soul. What was germinant with Tertullian became full grown and fruitful in Augustine's idea of

human nature. In his dogma of original depravity, "humanity is absolutely separated from God in consequence of Adam's sin;" the divine image in man is gone. To Augustine, redemption concerns but a part of mankind and depends upon the unconditioned divine choice. The work of redemption lies with the Church. By the rite of baptism the divine image is recreated. Even infants who have not been baptized are lost. Thus the office of the Church was magnified, and, by the merits he ascribed to the other sacraments, Augustine contributed in largest measure to the later supremacy of the Church; to its supremacy not only in spiritual, but in secular affairs Principal Tulloch says; "Like his great disciple in a later age,— Luther — Augustine was prone to emphasize the side of truth which he had most realized in his own experience, and, in contradistinction to the Pelagian exaltation of human nature, to depreciate its capabilities beyond measure." Prof. A. V. G. Allen writes, "No point more clearly illustrates the degradation which Christian theology underwent at the hands of Augustine than his doctrine of grace. Christ as the invisible teacher of humanity, whose presence in the world, in the reason and the conscience of man, is the power by which men are delivered from sin and brought into the liberty of the children of God, gives way, in the system of Augustine, to an impersonal thing or substance which is known as

grace. What is sometimes called the sacramental theology is based upon the Augustinian notion of grace,—the principle that man is built up in the spiritual life by a subtle quality conveyed to him from without through material agencies, rather than by evoking the divine that is within. Augustine was great in that he may be said to have made possible the career of the Latin Church. For a thousand years those who came after him did little more than reaffirm his teaching, and so deep is the hold which his long supremacy has left upon the church that his opinions have become identified with divine revelation, and are all that the majority of the Christian world yet know of the religion of Christ."

THE MIDDLE AGES

1. Ultimate Statement of the Orthodox Doctrine of the Trinity: the Autocracy in Western Christendom of the Papal Church. *The "Athanasian" Creed*, 809. —Christianity, from the fifth to the fifteenth century, metamorphosed by the blended Nicene and Augustinian theology working through a system of sacraments, administered by an autocratic hierarchy, held sway over Western Christendom. During this period the perfected formulation of the Trinitarian theory of Christ's Person came into existence, under the name of the great Nicene Father, Athanasius. Just when, and by whom, this

symbol was composed is not known. The records of the Church, however, show that at Friuli, in 796, the president of a council held there, Paulinus, said, "In the records of some synods it is laid down that no one may lawfully teach or frame another symbol of our faith (than the Nicene). Far be it from us, to frame or teach another symbol or faith, or in another manner, than they (the Nicene Fathers) appointed. But, according to their meaning, we have decreed to deliver in exposition, those matters, which haply on account of the brief statement of the truth are less understood by the simple and unlearned than they ought to be." Within fifty years after this address, the so-called "Athanasian" Creed was in existence, recognized as an authoritative exposition of the Papal doctrine of the Trinity and the Incarnation. In parts it reads as follows:—

"Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic faith; which faith except every one do keep entire and inviolate, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.

Now the Catholic faith is this—that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity.

Neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance.

* * * * * * * * *

And in this Trinity there is nothing before or after, nothing greater or less, but the whole three Persons are co-eternal to one another, and co-equal.

He therefore, that will be saved, must thus think of the Trinity.

Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation, that he also believe rightly the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now the right faith is, that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is both God and Man.

He is God of the substance of his Father, begotten before the world; and he is Man of the substance of his mother, born in the world.

Perfect God and perfect Man; of a rational soul, and human flesh subsisting.

Equal to the Father according to his Godhead, and less than the Father according to his Manhood.

One Christ, one not by the conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by the taking of the Manhood unto God.

* * * * * * * * *

This is the Catholic faith, which except a man believe faithfully and steadfastly, he cannot be saved."

The theory concerning the Church is embodied in a "Papal Rule," from which we learn, with many other decrees,—

1. "That Christ has established a Church upon earth, and that this Church is that which holds communion with the see of Rome, being one, holy, catholic, and apostolical.

2. That we are obliged to hear this Church; and, therefore, that she is infallible, by the guidance of Almighty God, in her decisions regarding faith.

3. That the pope or bishop of Rome, as successor to St. Peter, has always been, and is at present, by divine right, Head of this Church."

With this creed, and this assumption of Divine right and power for the Church, Christianity, as the evolution of the revelation of a transcendent Triune Deity, entrusted to and interpreted by an infallible human Agent, reached a consummate expression and its ultimate limit.

2. The Medieval Theology.—The best authoritative summary of Christian doctrines in the Middle Ages, is embodied in the decrees of the Council of Trent. This council met in the sixteenth century for the purpose of counteracting the influence of the Protestant Reformation, but its decrees were only a specific reiteration of the articles of faith which had reached full authorization before the year 1300, the year of the great Jubilee, when Pope Boniface VIII. caused to be celebrated, the absolute sovereignty, in Western Europe, of the Papal Church. The opening paragraph of the Tridentine decrees is a repetition and reaffirmation of the tenets of the Nicene Creed. Upon this introduction, follow dogmas and interpretations, many fold larger than the fundamental Creed, the result of the work of the Church

of the Empire during its growth to its position as the imperial Church. From these decrees it appears that the Medieval Theology means, besides the confessions of the Nicene Creed, all the Apostolical, Patristic and other traditions authorized by the Church. They teach that the Holy Scriptures are infallibly true and binding upon faith; that the Bible is true according to the sense in which the Holy Church holds it; and that it is never to be interpreted otherwise than in accordance with the unanimous agreement of the Fathers. A large part of the utterances of the Tridentine Council is devoted to the doctrine of Human Nature and the work of Christ. It is explicitly taught in them, that mankind are totally ruined, as the effect of Adam's fall, and that there is no salvation for any one upon whom the merits of Christ's work have not been bestowed, and who has not accepted them. Further, the decrees declare that there are seven sacraments necessary to human salvation, although not all of them are necessary for every one. Baptism is the first of these sacraments. This is absolutely necessary for all mankind. The other sacraments are confirmation, the eucharist, penance, extreme unction, holy orders and matrimony. The center of Medieval Theology is the doctrine of the Eucharist or the Lord's Supper, namely, "In the mass there is offered to God, a true, proper and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead, and in the

Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist there is truly, really and substantially, the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that a change is made of the whole essence of the bread into the body, and of the whole essence of the wine into the blood, and that partaking of either bread or wine, the communicant receives Christ whole and entire." Among the sacraments, penance is set forth as of great importance. Confession must be made, penance suffered and absolution received, under decree of the divinely authorized Church. The doctrine of Purgatory is declared to be true, and "souls in Purgatory detained, are helped by the suffrages of the faithful." The saints reigning with Christ are to be honored and invoked; they offer up prayers for men; their relics are to be held in veneration. The images of Christ, and of the perpetual Virgin, the Mother of God, and also of other saints, ought to be had and retained and honored and revered. The Power of Indulgence, it was claimed, had been left to the Church by Christ, and the use of it is most wholesome to Christian people. The Tridentine decrees close, by acknowledging the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church as the Mother and Mistress of all Churches; and by swearing obedience to the Bishop of Rome, as the successor of St Peter, Prince of the Apostles and Vicar of Jesus Christ.

It should be constantly kept in mind, in glancing

at this stupendous structure of the Christian Church of the Middle Ages, that, underneath its teachings, is the fundamental notion inherited from a far past, that God and the world and man are not essentially connected except through Christ. "God created all things out of nothing," was the doctrine of the Church. In the decrees of the Vatican Council of 1870, we read;—"The one only true God to manifest his perfection, with absolute freedom of counsel, created out of nothing, from the very first being of time, both the spiritual and corporeal creatures, and afterwards the human creature as partaking in a sense of both, consisting of soul and body." In the Middle Ages, the philosophic servants of the Church, the Scholastics, labored hard to prove the absolute eternity and infinity of God, and the process of the universe from God, and, at the same time, the undivineness and essential separateness of creation from God. By the Schoolmen, it was held that the human soul can be called divine, only in the sense that it is God's creature. Essential divinity for man, is to be found only in that union of man with God which is secured by man's receiving the substance of the God-man, Christ. Hence, in the Medieval Theology the awful importance of the celebration of the Lord's Supper, at which, the essential Deity, through transubstantiated bread and wine, is believed to be received into, and assimilated by, the human soul.

3. Scholasticism. Reason consecrated to the Service of Dogma.—The three centuries, of 450-750, are called the "Dark Ages." Barbarism, by force of arms, had crushed the Roman Empire, and during these centuries, the Roman Church, by its spiritual force had in turn conquered barbarism. The teachers of the schools established among the barbarians, in the seventh and eighth centuries, were called *scholastici*. The *scholastici* were dominated by Church dogma. They taught by the processes of what was then known of Aristotle's Logic. The influence of these logicians rapidly increased, and, from the ninth century, formal logic, as the discoverer and illuminator of truth, gained practical control of the monasteries and the cathedral schools. About that time one fundamental question became the center of Scholastic thought. That was, "Are what are called universal ideas real? Are they things, or names?" Towards the tenth century this question, almost to the exclusion of other problems, absorbed the intellectual energy of Western Europe. The general tendency of the Church authorities, was towards the theory that there are universal ideas existing really and independently of the separate things. The controversy, now known as that of Nominalism and Realism, did not, however, seriously disturb the Church until the eleventh century was well advanced, when Roscellin, a Nominalist, so challeng-

ed the Realists in a discussion concerning the Trinity, that his views were condemned as heretical. Roscellin was the first logician who actually came into conflict with the Church, which at that time was rapidly establishing itself as the civil and spiritual dictator of Europe. The chief opponent of Roscellin, and the champion of the Church, was another Scholastic, Anselm. With Anselm, Scholastic Realism, we may say, became the avowed servant of the Church. His *dictum*, "I believe in order that I may understand," was epoch making. Nominalism was condemned, and thenceforward, for three hundred years, Scholasticism and Scholastic Realism were identified. The Schoolmen, thenceforward, devoted their intellectual energy to putting Medieval Theology into logical forms. Then, for the Roman Catholic Church, the doctrine that Faith directs Reason was established. In the Papal Syllabus of 1864, we read; "Those who say that the methods and principles by which the scholastic doctors cultivated theology, are no longer suitable to the demands of the age and the progress of science, are anathema." The main work of Scholasticism was to comprehend revealed truth, and to rationalize the fixed creed of the Holy Catholic Church of Rome.

But, Schwegler says, "notwithstanding all this, Scholasticism was not without excellent results. Although completely in the service of the Church,

it originated in a scientific interest, and awoke consequently, the spirit of free inquiry and a love of knowledge. It converted objects of Faith into objects of thought; and even when it sought to establish by argument the authority of Faith, it was really establishing, contrary to its own knowledge and will, the authority of Reason."

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

The Renaissance. Philosophy separated from Dogma. Reason placed above Church Authority.—In the fourteenth century, Nominalism was revived and the foundations of Scholastic dogmatism were destroyed. In the fifteenth century occurred the "Revival of Letters." Gradually, "the free, universal, thinking spirit of antiquity was born afresh." In many directions there was rebirth,—in Philosophy, Science, Art, State, Church,—regenerations threatening general social revolution. In State and Church, Wyclif, Huss, Jerome, and Savonarola, had led revolts against the assumptions of Rome. The art of printing was developed, by which the products of the new thought were scattered everywhere; the hidden Bible was brought to light; a new world across the seas was discovered; a new maritime path to the Far East was traversed; a new and true theory of the place of the earth among the stars was maturing. A new age for mankind was at hand, styled by

Michelet, "the discovery of the world and the discovery of man."

THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

1. The Reformation. Protest against the Autocracy of the Church; Restoration of the Bible to Private Judgment.—The Church of Rome never seemed stronger than when this century opened. Hitherto, all heretics, the heralds of the new age, had been easily overcome by the Papal Church. But a slight allegiance held a large part of Christendom to the temporal lordship of the Pope of Rome. When Luther nailed his theses to the church door in Wittenberg, in 1517, the avenging hand of the Church found itself stayed by the power of a German State. The break, once begun, did not cease until half of Christendom had been severed from the temporal dominion of the Papacy.

Bunsen, reviewing the Protestant Reformation, found in it five distinguishing marks:—

1. The whole company of faithful people and not the clergy alone, constitute the Church.

2. The whole Church is the deposit of Man's consciousness of God.

3. The collective community ought to represent a people of God.

4. There is no difference between religious acts and secular acts.

5. A personal faith is the condition of inward peace with God. But this personal faith necessarily

involves free conviction, and therefore free inquiry and free speculation on the results thereof, though carried on under a sense of responsibility to God; and this again presupposes freedom of conscience and thought.

2. The Theology of the Reformation: substantially a Reaffirmation of Mediæval Doctrine.—The leaders of the Reformation were affected by the same forces which had set State, Science, Art and many other institutions and agencies of society, free. The religious movement immediately under their direction, however, is not to be considered as inclusive of all the religious emancipation of the time. The men who are known as "the Reformers," limited their right of private judgment by the Bible. They revolted from the Church in order to give perfect allegiance to what they believed was the written word of God. The theology which they made their standard was, for the most part, the same as that under which they had been reared, the theology of the Roman Church. They believed:—

1. In the doctrine of the Trinity, as set forth in the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds;

2. In the universality of God's eternal purposes, and also the free agency of man;

3. In the natural and entire depravity of man;

4. In the atonement made by Jesus Christ, through which, alone, human salvation is possible;

5. In instantaneous regeneration, by special operation of the Holy Spirit;

6. In justification by faith in Christ.

All the creeds of the Reformed Churches received these articles in one or another form, with greater or less modification. They constitute, what may be termed, the Theology of the Reformation.

For the rest, in forms of Church government, in the number and meaning of the sacraments and in the modes of their administration, and in some less important matters, the Churches of the Reformation differed from one another, and from the Mother Church.

3. The Lines of Evolution of the Reformed Theology. *Luther*, 1483-1546; *Calvin*, 1509-1564; *Arminius*, 1560-1609.—It is not possible within our narrow limits to follow the course of the Theology of the Reformation. It covers a period of more than three hundred years. It includes the histories of scores of Christian denominations; some of them now receiving millions of earnest adherents; many of them widely separated from one another by their differences of faith and practice, but all bound together by what they name the Evangelical Orthodox faith, summarized above.

The Churches which bear Luther's name, have, by profession, departed least, among Protestant bodies, from the faith matured in the Middle Ages. In practice, too, they stand nearest to the Roman

Church, by the doctrine of Consubstantiation, or the Real Presence of the body and blood of Christ with the bread and wine of the Eucharist.

The Augsburg Confession, (1530,) it is to be noted in passing, is silent on the doctrine of Predestination.

The theology formulated by Calvin, was embodied in the creeds of so many Protestant Churches, that it is often spoken of as the representative Reformed Theology. The list of Calvinistic creeds is too long to enumerate here. It includes the Westminster Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Articles of the Synod of Dort, the Thirty Nine Articles of the Church of England, and the confessions of various important Independent and Congregational denominations.

Calvinism is Augustinianism continued with an intensified meaning. Its distinguishing peculiarity lies in its views of Human Nature and of the Divine Decrees.

1. *Human Nature.* All mankind by Adam's fall lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever.

2. *Divine Decrees.* Concerning these, Calvin wrote;—"We assert that by an eternal and immutable counsel, God has once for all, determined both whom he would admit to salvation and whom he would condemn to destruction. We affirm that

that this counsel, so far as it concerns the Elect, is founded on his gratuitous mercy, totally irrespective of human merit; but that to those whom he devotes to condemnation, the way of life is closed by his own just and irreprehensible—but incomprehensible—judgment."

Arminius was educated a Calvinist, but he gradually came to doubt the truth of Calvin's doctrine of decrees and grace. He taught instead, a conditional election and reprobation, dependent upon divine foreknowledge. The great Methodist Episcopal denomination and its branches, are typical Arminian bodies.

4. Development of Rationalism. *Giordano Bruno*, 1548-1600. *Boehm*, 1575-1624. *Lord Bacon*, 1561-1626. *Descartes*, 1596-1650.—With the decay of Scholasticism, emancipated Reason began a career independent of ecclesiastical dogma. In its relation to the sciences, Reason at length took form in what is known as the Baconian Method. In its application to the human consciousness, it became the source of Modern Philosophy, through the speculations of Descartes. Prophetic of the new dominion of the Reason, there had lived in Italy, the martyr Bruno. He thought of God as the soul of the world. In Germany there had been Jacob Boehm, who anticipated much of the faith of a later day, in his mystic vision of all the world as but a perpetual outflow from the eternal One.

The Protestant Reformers, although they had transferred their allegiance from the Church to the Bible, and to the Bible only, were themselves more or less affected by the growing Rationalism. Luther was noticeably free in his judgments of the relative values of the books of the Bible. His acceptance of the doctrine of the Trinity was purely an act of obedience to tradition. "The Trinity" he said "is a heavenly thing which the world cannot understand. The schools have devised many distinctions, dreams and fancies, by which they have tried to set forth the Trinity, and have thus become fools," Melancthon had a forefeeling of what was coming. "In reference to the Trinity, I have always feared," he wrote, "that these things would break out again. What disturbances will be raised in the next age whether the Logos and the Holy Spirit are hypostases." Zwingli, the Swiss Reformer, 1484-1531, while orthodox in regard to the Trinity, declared that, "Religion has not been confined within the boundaries of Palestine, since God did not create Palestine only; he created the whole world," and, "If the question be put, Did Christ restore the whole human family or only the church of believers? I answer, Christ brought by his salvation as much good into the world, as Adam by his sinning brought evil." Zwingli showed, we are told, a decided tendency towards belief in universal salvation. How far Rationalism had entered the circle of

those even, who accepted the Bible as the Word of God, may be seen in the letter of Œcolampadius to Servetus, in 1530; "You do not admit that it was the Son of God who was to come as man, but that it was the man who came that was the Son of God." Dr. J. H. Allen writes, of Faustus Socinus, that towards the close of the sixteenth century, "He denied the Trinity, the deity of Christ, the personality of the devil, the native and total depravity of man, the vicarious atonement and the eternity of punishment. His theory was, that Christ was a man divinely commissioned, who had no existence before He was conceived by the virgin Mary; that human sin was the imitation of Adam's sin, and that human salvation was the imitation and adoption of Christ's virtue; that the Bible was to be interpreted by human reason."

Our interest, however, lies chiefly by that movement at the close of the Middle Ages, by which the Reason was consciously made the supreme arbiter of religious beliefs. That movement received its first definite and systematic character, in the speculations of Descartes, after whom came Spinoza, to whom directly the chief formative force in what may be styled Modern Theology, as we shall see, may be traced.

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

1. Further Development of Rationalism. Rationalistic Interpretation of the Bible. English Arianism: Puritanism: Platonism: Skepticism: Deism. *Locke*, 1632-1704. *Milton*, 1608-1674. *Cromwell*, 1599-1658. *Cudworth*, 1617-1688. *Hobbes*, 1588-1679.—No radical change in recognized Christian theology took place during this century. The characteristic doctrines of the Reformation remained dominant influences. One noticeable sign of the time, however, appeared in England; an increasing tendency among numbers of professed Christians, to criticise traditional theology, wholly upon the basis of an unprejudiced interpretation of the Scriptures, and to seek to restore to the world primitive Christianity. The representative product of this tendency, was Locke's "Reasonableness of Christianity." It has been said that Locke's "rationalizing temper slid easily to what is often claimed as the Unitarian dogma. It was, really, a form of Arianism, like Milton's. And, like his, it was the result of a literal rendering of texts, without any conscious naturalistic bias, or any suspicion of what at this day we should call a rationalizing criticism. The Arianism of Locke had a great and immediate effect on English thought, and is reflected pretty constantly in the Anglican theology for a century or more." Locke's "method of investigation was the very simple and obvious

one,—which only needed that clear, sagacious and honest understanding to suggest—to search the record, and by the canons of plain sense to determine *what Christianity is.*

"The answer is simple. It is, that Jesus is the Messiah in the precise and literal sense in which he was announced to the Jewish people. Only, we must interpret that sense to the understanding of our day. So interpreted, it will mean that he is the Divinely appointed sovereign of human life, especially of conscience and conduct, which are the ultimate thing in human life."

Also, in England in this century, Puritanism was at the zenith of its devotion and influence. Rigid as was their hold on the faith of the Genevan Reformer, no body of men ever insisted more on man's right to worship God after the dictates of his own conscience than the Puritans, however little their practice towards differing believers harmonized with their claim. The spirit of the new age was steadily emancipating State and Church. "The Christian Commonwealth" passed through a brief career in England, and was borne across the sea to America. The Pilgrim Fathers set sail from Holland for the new world of the West, and John Robinson, as they departed, assured them;—"More light is yet to break from God's word." The Pilgrim Fathers, James Russell Lowell wrote, "had a conception (which those will call grand who regard simplicity as a necessary element

of grandeur) of founding a commonwealth on those two eternal bases of Faith and Works; they had indeed no revolutionary ideas of universal liberty, but yet what answered the purpose quite as well, abiding faith in the brotherhood of Man and the Fatherhood of God." It was in this century that Milton, prophetic of the inevitable advance of Christianity to higher and larger forms, declared, "Now once again, by all the concurrences of signs and by the general instinct of holy and devout men, God is decreeing to begin some new and great period in his Church, even to the reforming of the Reformation itself." The master poet divined better than he intended.

Along with the struggle in England, between the new Ecclesiasticism of the State Church and the new Protestantism of the Dissenters, "Natural Religion" and a "Skeptical Philosophy" started upon memorable developments. Deism, which Dr. Otto Pfleiderer defines, as "a system which conceives God as the thinking and willing 'highest being', and ascribes to the world such an independence of existence and activity as against God, that God comes to stand on the same footing with the finite beings of the world, as a being like them" began with Lord Herbert, the career which so deeply stirred the scholarship and the popular mood of the following century. Thomas Hobbes, by his philosophical speculations, led a barren, materialistic empiricism which

left English thought for a long time afterwards without inspiration.

In England, in this century also, an unsuccessful attempt at the opening up anew of the sublime vision of Plato, was made by Cudworth and More, both ignorant of the "God intoxication" of one mightier and truer than Plato, who was then suffering for his faith in Holland.

The seventeenth century is especially noteworthy, for the initiation in England, in Religion and in Philosophy, of widely divergent tendencies under the rationalizing spirit of the new age, yet under the influence of Medieval theologic speculation.

2. Emancipated Philosophic Rationalism in Germany. Permanent Restoration of the Idea of the Unity of the Universe. *Spinoza*, 1632-1677.—The seventeenth century is memorable in the history of Christianity, for the permanent recovery of a principle in Philosophy, by which Christianity, at length, renewed the development which had been checked at the time Augustinianism mastered the Church of Rome. Spinoza's words, "It is not absolutely necessary to salvation to know Christ after the flesh: but it is altogether otherwise if we speak of the Son of God, that is, the eternal Wisdom of God, which is manifested in all things, and chiefly in the human soul, and most of all in Jesus Christ," were prophetic of the future dominant conviction in Christian consciousness. Dr. Hedge declared that "the result

of Spinoza's influence,—by the fructification of his idea in the thoughts and feelings of the thinking and cultured minds of our time,—may be summed up, as emancipation from the Dualism and the Anthropomorphism of the old popular faith. Spinoza has given us a God who is not an individual secluded and remote,—a regent enthroned above the skies,—but an all present reality. In his attempt to establish this beneficent verity, he sacrifices the proper personality of God. But this very extreme has contributed more effectually, perhaps, than a more theistic view would have done, to correct the opposite error. And this false extreme is not essential, I think, to the central and constitutive principle of the 'Ethica.' Unity of substance is not incompatible with the creation, by self-limitation, of individual existences having separate consciousnesses, and therefore distinct persons; whereby the personality of God is maintained, in the one essential article of a conscious and moral relation to others. The strength of Spinozism is the quickened sense which, by its emancipation from Dualism and Anthropomorphism, it gives us of the all pervading and immediate presence of God. The divine Omnipresence, once a cold, unmeaning dogma, it has made a fact of consciousness." Schwegler, commenting upon Spinoza's thought, wrote, "It is the most abstract monotheism that can possibly be conceived. It is not by accident, that

Spinoza, a Jew, has, in explanation of the Universe, once more revived the idea of its absolute unity: such idea is, in some sort, a consequence of his nationality, an echo of the East."

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

1. Deistic and Skeptical Development of Rationalism in England. The Evangelical Revival. Extension of Arian and Socinian Unitarianism. *Hume*, 1711-1776. *Wesley*, 1703-1791. *Priestley*, 1733-1804.— Before following the evolution of the idea which has been operative in the modern metamorphosis of Christianity,—the restored idea of the immanence of God in the world and in man,—let us glance at the culmination and decline of the unillumined rationalism associated with the Medieval Theology, and the emotional reaction from it shown in Evangelical Revivalism.

"The eighteenth century occupies a large and important place in the history of Christian thought. The traditional theology, as it had developed in the Latin Church, and as it had descended, unchanged in its fundamental aspects, to the Protestant theologians of the seventeenth century, was now compelled to enter into a conflict with human reason. To some it appears as if inspired by an evil agency for the destruction of the truth; to others a necessary part in a divine process by which God was taking away the old

that He might establish the new." The controversy cleared the way for a new view of Christianity. It compelled the study of the historical evidences of Christianity and of Biblical interpretation. Much that had been held in connection with both these studies thitherto, was thenceforth made untenable. Associated with, and in large part the result of, the English controversy, was the spread of a calamitous infidelity and materialism in France; a general loosening of the creedal bonds of the English Established Church; the enthusiastic affirmation of the direct influence of the Holy Spirit upon the human soul, under the preaching of Wesley and Whitefield; and the substitution of a serene, unimpassioned Arian and Socinian Unitarianism, for the rigid and severe Calvinism of many Presbyterian and Baptist Churches, under the persuasion of Dr. Priestley and Joseph Lindsey.

The changes taking place in England extended to other countries. In America especially, many men prominent in the organization of the new republic were under the influence of the skeptical rationalism of the Deists. In America, the movement started by John Wesley attained a wonderful impetus among the people. And in America, the revived Arianism and Socinianism gained a hold among the ministers and the people of the churches of the Puritans and Pilgrims which was maintained well into the present century, when

it gradually yielded to a higher, more ideal Unitarian faith.

2. Preparation for a New Advance in the Evolution of Christianity. German Illuminism. Moravian Pietism. *Lessing,* 1729-1781. *Count Zinzendorf,* 1700-1760.—The idea which Spinoza brought back to philosophy was not left to perish, or to be ineffective. For a time, it was neither honored nor used. But the eighteenth century produced a man who discerned in that idea, the promise and power of a truer Christianity than the world had known for many centuries. "Under the influence of Spinoza, Lessing disowned the prevailing theological conception of a God outside the world." And more than that, Lessing's faith in the Providence of the immanent God, disclosed to him a thought, which, since his time, has become one of the most fruitful truths cherished for both Science and Religion, "The Education of the Human Race." "What education is to the individual, that revelation is to mankind," are the pregnant words with which Lessing opened his creative essay. In Stahr's "*Life of Lessing*" we read, "Lessing stands for all coming ages as the true hero of the illuminism of his century.

The mediation between revelation and reason, he discovered in an idea not foreign to the old Church Fathers: in the idea of the realization of the truths of revelation by their gradual transformation into the truths of the reason, to fulfil

the divine plan of the education of the human race." How fruitful was the seed sown by this German illuminist, we shall see hereafter.

Meanwhile, let us turn attention to a small community dwelling in Saxony, a people marked by a peculiarly fervent and gentle piety. They were known as the "Moravian Brethren," and were under the patronage of a singularly pure minded nobleman, Count Zinzendorf. The Moravians were in faith descendants of John Huss, martyred by the Council of Constance for heresy: heresy which arose from his consecration to the Christ of the Gospels, rather than to the authority of the Pope. In the preceding century, the "Brethren" had suffered with Unitarians and other Protestants, in the Roman Catholic persecution which silenced dissent in Bohemia. For a time they had preserved their faith in secret retreats, but later had found refuge upon the estate of the pious German Count. Among other beneficent agencies which they conducted in their new home, were schools in which, with ordinary learning, the deepest and purest religious principles were inculcated. Some Moravian missionaries had profoundly affected the career of John Wesley. The Moravian schools at Niesky and Barby, were to affect even more profoundly, the career of the apostle of a renewed Christianity in the present century. Freidrich Daniel Schleiermacher, when a child, was placed under the care of the Moravian Brethren.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

1. A New Advance of Christianity through the Reunion of Philosophic Rationalism and Faith. *Schleiermacher*, 1768-1834.—"All the profounder schools of religious thought in this century date, it is said, from Schleiermacher." Reviewing his mental character, Dr. Otto Pfleiderer says, "Herrnhutist piety, Leibnizian illumination, Kantian criticism, Fichtean idealism, Schelling's philosophy of identity, Spinoza's pantheism and Plato's dialectics, — all entered into Schleiermacher's thought." His father, an army chaplain, a faithful Calvinist in creed, had urged his son, when troubled with speculative questionings, to study Lessing, especially "*The Education of the Human Race*." During his university course, Schleiermacher was an eager and omnivorous student of whatever bore upon religious thought and life. He was rapidly freed from both the popular theology and philosophy of his day. He examined, and was dissatisfied with, the old metaphysics. He accepted for a time, Fichte's idealism. At length, he found in Spinoza, that which his mind needed to give it rest. "Spinoza's contemplation of all finite existences under the form of eternity and unity, and his willing surrender to the orderly regularity of the universe, brought him freedom from passion and error and the blessedness of intellectual love of God." In his "*Discourses on Religion*," Schleier-

macher paid this homage to the obscure prophet of the higher faith of the emancipated Reason. "Join with me in reverently offering a tribute to the manes of the holy and rejected Spinoza! Him the lofty world-spirit penetrated, the Infinite was his beginning and end, the universe his only and infinite love. In holy innocence and deep humility, he reflected himself in the eternal world and saw how he in turn was its chosen mirror. Full of religion was he, and full of the Holy Spirit, and therefore he stands alone and unapproached,—a master in his art, but exalted above the profane herd of those who practise it; without disciples and without citizenship." The discipleship of Schleiermacher was not however to the letter of Spinoza's doctrine. It was, says Dr. Pfleiderer, "a modified and spiritualized Spinozism, the same that we encounter in Lessing, Herder and Goethe." In Prof. A. V. G. Allen's "*Continuity of Christian Thought*," the value of Schleiermacher's work is thus estimated;—"In Schleiermacher we have also, for the first time since the days of Greek theology, a representative theologian of the highest intellectual capacity who had drunk deeply at the springs of Greek philosophy and culture." "Against the cold idea of Deism he asserted a living, spiritual presence, a God who is with us and in us, who is allied to humanity by an organic relationship. The result of this conviction of the immanence of God implied the

restoration to supreme place in his theology of the spiritual or essential Christ, who is above the conditions of time or space. Christ was the incarnation of the Divine Consciousness as it exists in its fullness in God." "Schleiermacher contradicted the inmost principle of the Medieval or Calvinistic theologies, when he declared that in the earthly life of Christ there was to be seen the glorious exhibition of manifested Deity. Calvin had regarded the life of Christ in this world as the humiliation of the Son of God, in which the divine glory was concealed. Because Schleiermacher had also risen above the dualism of Latin theology, which made the human and the divine alien to each other, the Incarnation appeared once more as it had in Greek theology,—the actual manifestation of God in the human, so that Jesus of Nazareth became the revelation of God in His absolute glory. When as by a revelation, in the humble existence of the prophet of Nazareth the unveiled glory of the infinite God was discerned, the thought of ages was reversed."

"Another principle which Schleiermacher regarded in its larger relationships, and restated from a higher point of view, was the doctrine of election." He held that "humanity as a whole had been redeemed in Christ, that grace no less than law, was the dispensation under which all men everywhere are living." Lessing's idea of the education of the human race, Schleiermacher

accepted and extended to an indefinite future and beyond the present life.

What has been here collected interpretative of this eminent German apostle of Faith and Reason, gives but a glance at one or two of the characterizing marks of the revolution which has occurred in the modern development of Christianity. It, however, well illustrates the ever renewing advance of Christianity from form to form. "As truly as Augustine represented his age, Schleiermacher utters the truth to which all that is highest in modern Christianity continues to respond. His name is held in honor in Germany, as that of one from whom dates a 'new era in the history of theology.' The great German theologians who have come after him have been his disciples. Directly or indirectly, his influence has been telling upon every student of religious truth in America and in England." The tenets of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox theology,—the doctrine of the Trinity as ordinarily taught, of total depravity, of the expiatory sacrifice of Christ and of endless suffering,—Schleiermacher found "neither in the Gospel nor in his heart." He was the prophet of a form of Christianity sure to come, when a true idea of God finds acceptance in devout minds and hearts. Through him, the ancient Christian doctrine of the Logos, transformed, transfigured, however, by man's maturer thought, had been renewed for the Christian Church.

MODERN UNITARIANISM.

1. Further Development of the Protest against the Reformed Theology. The Moral Reaction in America, from Calvinism. Ethical Idealism. *William Ellery Channing,* 1781-1842.

The genesis of what is known as Modern Unitarianism, is to be traced to the reaction consequent upon the re-affirmation in the Theology of the Reformation, of the Augustinian doctrine of Human Nature and of the Divine Decrees. It was from the first, a moral protest, justified by a renewed sense of the inalienable right of the Reason to autonomy, which had been aroused in the Church at the time of the Renaissance. The moral protest directed the protest of the intellect. It easily found confirmation in the words of the restored Bible. In argument, the seventeenth and eighteenth century Unitarians were as Scriptural as those whom they opposed. With perfect confidence in the "reasonableness of Christianity," as it was originally instituted, they sought to restore to the world the "Christianity of Christ." They aimed to do away with the mass of accretions by which, they honestly believed, the original divine simplicity of the Gospel had been concealed. These words of Dr. Priestley concerning Jesus, written towards the end of the eighteenth century, may be taken as a fair illustration of the reverent mood of the early Unitarian faith. "Our allegiance was given,"

he said, "to the Saviour whose precepts we have obeyed, whose spirit we have breathed, whose religion we have defended and whose honours we have asserted, without making them to interfere with those of his Father and our Father, his God and our God, that supreme and awful Being, to whose will he was always perfectly submissive, and for whose unrivalled prerogatives he always showed the most ardent zeal."

But the Unitarian movement, while always devoutly Christian, was specifically under the guidance of the moral impulses of human nature and the demands of the Reason. Gradually, in consequence, the representatives of Unitarian thought became more and more sympathetic with the growing Philosophy and Science of the present age. As in no other body of professed Christians, there is to be seen among them, as the years passed, a reflex of the increasing authority of the Reason. Whether consciously or not, they sought steadily to make a religious application and Christian interpretation of prevailing philosophic and scientific truth. They drew inspiration from an abiding confidence in the divine character of the Christian revelation, but this revelation rapidly disclosed itself to them as a revelation of the spirit rather than of the letter.

Modern Unitarianism, so known, dates, we may say, from a memorable movement about eighty years ago among the Congregational Churches of

America, of which Dr. William Ellery Channing became the leading representative.

Dr. Channing was reared in a home which was overshadowed by the theology of Calvin and Jonathan Edwards. His religious sense was intensely active and aspiring. As a college student he came across the writings of Hutcheson, a prominent opponent in the eighteenth century of the influence of Hobbes, the leading utilitarian and materialistic philosopher of the time, in England. In Hutcheson's treatise on "*Beauty and Virtue*," young Channing found "the fountain light of all his day, the master light of all his seeing,"—the Dignity of Human Nature. As though by a flash, he received the conviction that the human soul is by nature capable of devotion to absolute and universal good. Under this conviction, Channing's inherited faith was rapidly out-grown. His moral sense led him to rebel against the creed of Edwards and Calvin. He entered the Christian ministry, and, as years passed, he became known as a leader of the liberal movement which had long been gathering force among the New England Congregationalists.

As far as Unitarianism took form under Dr. Channing's guidance, it was as an exalted, ethical idealism, finding in Christianity the profoundest inspiration for the moral nature of man. In Dr. Channing's interpretation of Christianity there was a marked evolution. In his early writings, he

believed himself to be an unquestioning student of the Christian scriptures, determined to find in them, "the will of God and the uncorrupted doctrines of Jesus." God is, in a real sense, the Father of the human soul, he wrote. Man, though sinful, is God's free child. "It might be presumptuous, of course, to speak of man as being a partaker of the divine nature, did not the Scriptures employ this bold language, but this divine authority justifies us in saying that, in the strictest propriety of language, God is our Father." "Love to God is, therefore, but refined filial affection." "Life is God's plan for training human souls, the heirs of his own holiness and blessedness, for their inheritance. This truth must be recognized, and we must begin a career of worthy development, conscious of our powers and resolute to use them. Above all other truth is moral truth: it is our highest duty to seek that. Nowhere can that be found so beautiful and pure as in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Turn to that most affecting evidence of the worth of our nature, God's gift to us of his own Son. See how this only begotten Son,—whose position, though not revealed with precision is evidently one of peculiar intimacy with the Father,—see how he, by his relation to us, is our saviour, friend, guide, and giver of eternal life." In Dr. Channing's relation to the Bible, there developed in later years, a conscious interpretation of its records

under the authority of the Reason. "In the Bible are clearly revealed the essential principles of Christianity, such as God's unity and paternal character, the equity and mercy of his administration, and they accord perfectly with the discoveries of Nature and the surest dictates of the moral faculties. All passages of the Scriptures, therefore, are to be interpreted in consistency with these fundamental truths. There must be a rational interpretation of the Scriptures; the success, perhaps the very existence, of Christianity requires this service. There is a growing demand for a form of religion which will agree with the clear dictates of conscience and the plain manifestations the universe makes of God." Towards the end of his life, Dr. Channing's emphasis upon personal freedom became extreme. He proclaimed the Divinity of Human Nature. He confessed allegiance to a pure and universal Christianity, only. "What are the central truths to be taught?" he asked. "Is not the character of God as our moral Parent —the truth of truths? What a quickening thought it is, what a ground of infinite hope, that God has given us a nature like his own, that the whole universe is formed as a field for its nutriment and growth! What an office is the preacher's,—to awaken the *divine* in man. In my books, I know I have given utterance to some great truths which were written not from tradition, but from deep conviction, from the depths of my soul,—may I

not say from inspiration? I mean nothing miraculous: does not God speak in us all? I may sometimes use mystical language in my desire to express strongly the connection between man and God. We must look for God in our own souls. In the soul is the fountain of all divine truth. An outward revelation is only possible and intelligible on the ground of conceptions and principles previously furnished by the soul. On what is universal and everlasting in human nature, Christianity is founded. For years I have felt a decreased interest in settling Christ's precise rank. The power of his character lies in his moral perfection. I have attached less importance to the settlement of Christ's rank, since I have learned that all minds are of one family. Human and angelic natures are essentially one. Holding this doctrine, the humanitarian system does not shock me." Once Dr. Channing in old age, said to a friend, "I have at times experiences of the communion of mind and heart with the eternal Father, which Jesus seems to have had unceasingly, and which gives such unapproached,—I do not say unapproachable—dignity to his expressions."

As represented in Dr. Channing's thought, Unitarianism gave to Christianity the character of an ethical ideal, springing out of a consciousness of spiritual association,—shall we say essential union?—with God. This ideal has never been

surpassed. Since Dr. Channing's day the Unitarian movement has been placed fully in touch with maturing Philosophy and Science, but it has not deserted, or lowered, that ideal. Unitarianism has in recent years accepted the results of modes of thought of which Dr. Channing could know nothing. It has, by some of its later representatives, been brought more intimately into contact with the historic consciousness of the Church Universal, but it remains still under the same ethical inspiration of which Dr. Channing was the aspiring prophet.

2. American Transcendentalism. Philosophic Rationalism and Religious Intuition. Pure Christianity the Absolute Religion. Continuity of Faith and Doctrine in the Evolution of the Church Universal. *Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 1804-1882. *Theodore Parker*, 1810-1860. *Frederic Henry Hedge*, 1805-1890. — The Transcendental movement brought to New England the influences which flowed over Christendom from emancipated Philosophy in Germany. The work of Emerson, Parker and Hedge was their main channel. Spinoza's idea of the Divine immanence, Lessing's discovery of the education of the human race, Kant's transcendentalism, Schelling's, Fichte's, Hegel's idealism, Schleiermacher's re-awakened and newly inspired Christian consciousness, the results of a scientific criticism of the Bible matur-

ing in Germany, all were borne to America, and there received by some of the leaders of the Unitarian movement. Goethe had found rest in Spinoza's theological vision :—

> "A God my worship may not win,
> Who lets the world about his finger spin,
> A thing extern ; my God must rule within,
> And whom I own for Father, God, Creator,
> Hold Nature in Himself, Himself in Nature,"—

wrote the great German poet, and his faith found response among some of the leaders of American Unitarianism. Coleridge, in England, had caught the new inspiration :—

> "'Tis the sublime of men,
> Our noontide majesty, to know ourselves
> Parts and propositions of one wondrous whole.
> But 'tis God
> Diffused through all that doth make all one whole.
> God all in all. We and our Father one;"—

and this inspiration was felt by many Unitarians to be a living Divine word. Wordsworth shared, also, in this discernment of the immanence of God:—

> "I have felt
> A presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts ; a sense sublime,
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of Man ;—

and Wordsworth's feeling opened the spiritual eyes of many Unitarians to the infinite Presence.

In a "*Memoir*" of his father, Rev. William C.

Gannett thus describes those who were the agents of these new influences upon Unitarianism:—"The Transcendentalists were simply the little New England quota in the great return of thinkers to Idealism after the long captivity to Sensationalism. As a school of critics they were the earliest in America, who boldly used the modern historic method in the study of the Bible. As a school of theology they dispensed with Mediation, in order to claim for the soul access direct to its Father. They have been credited with bringing the doctrine of the Holy Spirit into the Unitarian 'common sense in religion.' But more than the common doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and more than Orthodoxy compassed by its faith in Incarnation and the Helping Grace, their thought really implied. It implied a universal *law* of access and communion. It affirmed abiding contact of the finite and the Infinite, in virtue of the very nature of the soul and Over-Soul. Inspiration fresh as well as old; Revelation constant; Miracle but the human spirit's pinnacle of action; God the living God, not a deity then and there announcing himself with evidence of authenticity, but indwelling here and now in every presence."

Under the deepening intuitions of Transcendentalism, Unitarians gradually transformed their conception of Christianity, more and more into a direct consciousness of essential communion of the human soul with "the Universal

Soul." Ralph Waldo Emerson, the guiding voice of the new thought, spoke of this Universal Soul, as the Reason in its most exalted manifestations. "It is not mine or thine or his, but we are its; we are its property and men. And the blue sky in which the private earth is buried, the sky with its eternal calm, and full of everlasting orbs, is the type of Reason. That which, intellectually we call Reason, considered in relation to nature, we call Spirit. Spirit is the Creator. Spirit hath life in itself, and man, in all ages and countries, embodies it in his language, as the *Father*." Of Jesus, Emerson said, "Alone in all history, Jesus Christ estimated the greatness of man. He saw that God incarnates himself in man and evermore goes forth anew to take possession of his world. In how many churches, by how many prophets, tell me, is man made sensible that he is an infinite Soul; that the earth and heavens are passing into his mind; that he is drinking from the Soul of God."

Theodore Parker, the Luther of the New Christian Reformation, re-affirmed, with the most emphatic words, the revivified doctrine of the immanence of God in the world and man, and the permanence thereby of essential Christianity. "Religion unites man with God till he thinks God's thought which is Truth; feels God's feeling which is Love; wills God's will which is eternal Right; thus finding God in the sense wherein he is not

far from any one of us; becoming one with Him and so partaking of the Divine Nature." "Come to the plain words of Jesus of Nazareth, and Christianity is a very simple thing; very simple. It is absolute pure Morality, absolute pure Religion; the love of God acting without let or hindrance. Its sanction is the voice of God in your heart; the perpetual presence of Him who made us and the stars overhead; Christ and the Father abiding in us."

Dr. Frederic Henry Hedge, however, was the one among the leaders of the New Reformation, who felt most distinctly the nexus of Unitarianism with historic Christianity, and who interpreted it as but a new metamorphosis of the evolving Christian Gospel. Dr. Hedge, it has been said, "was probably the ablest, deepest and most widely cultivated intellect that the denomination has embraced. He was essentially a philosophical student and thinker." The future may show that he penetrated more deeply into the meaning of Religion as a historic fact, and saw more clearly the real intent and consequent permanent worth of Christianity, than any other American leader of modern Unitarianism. Dr. Hedge had, in preeminence, the liberality which is associated with the most catholic knowledge. His mind absorbed the products of the maturest philosophy. He was familiar with religious history. He had ability to interpret the knowledge he acquired. He spoke

always from a height whence he saw thoughts and events in farther reaching relations than those of their immediate surroundings.

Under the "Transcendental" enthusiasm, Dr. Hedge kept a middle way and a sure footing. He felt, as we have seen, the strength and confidence which had been brought to religious faith by the restoration to Philosophy, through Spinoza, of the idea of the immanence of God in the universe, but he saw too the weakness of this idea, when it was so held as to destroy man's personal individuality. In his judgment, "Pantheism and Theism are not contradictory, but complementary, the one to the other." He was confident of the continuity of Religion from age to age, and it was impossible for him to break with Christianity and Christian history. "A truer idea of the Christian dispensation," he said, "is expressed in the word *development*. Christianity is not a fixed but a flowing quantity and power. It is not to be found complete and entire in any scripture, church or age, but unfolds itself successively through many scriptures, churches, and ages. It is not a totality but a process; a process of which the Church,—that is, Christian society,—is at once medium and exponent, and ecclesiastical history the report." Dr. Hedge's sweep of vision is well shown in the following excerpt from one of his essays:—"Religion begins with the worship of things; from fetishism it advances to personification of natural

forces, and proceeds in the direction of personism, until some quickened and reflective soul,—in the language of theology some divinely-missioned individual,—through predominance in him of the moral sense, arrives at the truer conception of Deity as moral lawgiver, and adores the God of conscience above all Gods. Then commences, for the age and people in which such prophet appears, the reaction of the inner life ; the soul asserts its supremacy over Nature ; religion becomes internal, reflective, moral, and protestant. Christianity consummated that reaction, completely abolishing the Nature-worship and polytheism of the Greco-Roman world. The two main streams of ancient religion, Hellenism and Semitic monotheism,—themselves the *débouchures* respectively of other, elder, Phœnician, Egyptian, and Persian faiths,—found their confluence in the Christian dispensation. Hellenism was completely merged and lost in it. Semitic monotheism, after delivering its 'tribute wave,' has preserved an independent existence, and still survives in the Judaism of the 'Dispersion ;' still flourishes in Mohammedism, one of the most wide spread of existing religions. This, and the elder religions of Central and Southern Asia,—Brahmanism and Buddhism,—still sway the major portion of the human race, but with such fixity, such incapacity of growth or effective reformation, as must needs neutralize their historic influence, if it does not abridge their duration.

"Christianity is the solvent of other religions and may be regarded as the ultimate religion of man. In Protestant Christianity" (Protestant in the largest sense of the term) "religion has reached the extreme limit which divides it from pure Science; in its latest development it seems to portend the union of the two. Further than this, Religion can not go in the direction of Reason, —in the rational apprehension of spiritual truth. There can be no progress out of Christianity into any new religion; unless, indeed we give that name to some future dispensation of Science, applying ascertained laws and scientific demonstration to the ethical and social relations of man."

Concerning the Person of Christ, Dr. Hedge wrote, "Nowhere, it seems to me, is the guiding Providence of God in history more conspicuous than it is in the wording of the final dictum of the Councils respecting the nature of Christ. The Christology of the Church was the growth of centuries. It was well for the Church, and well for humanity, that the Athanasian view prevailed as against the Arian and against the monophysite. The Catholic or Orthodox Christology is precisely that which, by the comprehensiveness and impartiality of its statement, allows the largest liberty of speculation, and admits of the greatest diversity of view. It merely affirms what every one believes, who believes in Christianity at all, —that God and man wrought together in Christ for the

regeneration of human kind.

"The Council of Nicæa dates a new era in the history of human thought. God in actual contact with man,—God in man and man in God,—is the underlying idea of the Athanasian dogma which asserts that the Son is consubstantial with the Father. Probably, Athanasius did not perceive the real drift and scope of his doctrine. It was only of the Person of Christ that he affirmed substantial community with God. * * * * *

"The fault of the Trinitarian doctrine, is not what it teaches, but what it omits to teach. It is not the assertion of the divinity in Christ, but the limitation of divine humanity to him, the implied exclusion of the rest of mankind from any part or lot in this matter. In the view of the Trinitarian doctrine, mankind, at large, are separated from Christ, not only in degree but in kind; they have not that oneness with him which he himself accorded to them in his prayer, 'That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee, that they may be one in us. They have not that part in God which one of the New Testament writers affirms of Christians, at least,—'Called to be partakers of the divine nature.'"

In the thought of this clear-sighted thinker, Unitarianism was brought into visible and vital connection with the Christian Church Catholic, and appeared as the consummate product of a continuous evolution of the essential Christianity.

The ancient faith and the emancipated Philosophy of the Modern Age flowed together. The Old and the New had become one. The new Christian *Credo*, so far as it was uttered in the mind of Dr. Hedge, is embodied in these eloquent words,—

"I believe in the ever proceeding incarnation of the Spirit of God in human life. I believe in the ever proceeding transubstantiation of the world into the similitude of the Divine Idea. The Trinitarian doctrine was a crude attempt to formulate these truths but instead of their exponent became their grave. Trinitarian theology has lost its hold of advancing Christian thought, but the thing it embodied, Divine Humanity, across all the mists of theology is struggling into light. Thus, practical Christianity fulfills the truth that was hidden in the absolute dogmas of the Church; and thus, where 'the letter killeth, the spirit maketh alive.'"

Under the influence of the Transcendental movement, Christianity as developed in Modern Unitarianism became more and more identified with a conscious communion of the soul with the Divine Presence within itself, and with acceptance of Jesus Christ as the prototype of a divine life possible for every man. This faith has never been authorized in a formal Unitarian creed. It has not yet wholly taken the place of so called, and mistakenly called, "Channing Unitarianism," but plainly enough, one can see, it has given a deepen-

ing harmony of tone to the words and writings of those who, in later years, have come to be representative of the Unitarian movement. At the present day, more than any other one power, it characterizes the implicit Unitarian creed.

3. Christian Faith in Union, not only with Philosophic Rationalism, but with the Philosophy of Science. Present Unitarianism among the Forces prophetic of a Form of Christianity which shall realize for Mankind the full Religious Consciousness of Jesus Christ, and therein, Satisfaction for Man's Longing for Union with God.

The Transcendental movement is not alone to be taken into the account, in setting forth Christianity as it has taken form among Unitarians. Science as well as Philosophy has been a potent force in guiding the Modern Age. Unitarianism has not been unmindful of the domain of truth which Science has opened up in the physical universe. This has been more and more recognized, and what it discloses for Religion has been learned and taught. To Unitarians, all truth is divine; and, to Unitarians, Christianity only the more really fulfills its purpose, when its transfiguring spirit embodies itself in all truth. Among Unitarians, therefore, the theology of Christianity has been, continuously, in recent years, enriched and magnified by the revelations of Science, and

scientific truth has been deepened and spiritualized by Christian Theology. Many quotations, from the works of representative Unitarians might be given to illustrate this fact, but it will suffice, as indicating the thought pervading them, to repeat a few passages from the sermon of Rev. Richard Armstrong, of England, with which, a few months ago, he opened the National Conference of the Unitarian Churches of America.

"The physical science of our time," he said, "has been unfolding to me her wondrous tale. And I find, as I look out on the world in the light of all this new knowledge, a pressure of God in upon consciousness everywhere and always, surpassing any vividness of the God-presence in any particular miracle which legend or myth has ever alleged. My imagination is wholly taken captive by this stupendous revelation of the God-force which modern conceptions of the Cosmos furnish. Through the whole beats the one life-force which is God, controlling every molecule in the petal of a daisy, in the meteoric ring of Saturn, in the remotest nebula that outskirts space, as though that molecule were the universe and all the rest a dream. When I realize that this energy is *God*,— for by no clear thinking can it be aught else,— God there, holding the stars in their places, God here, moving the sap along the leaf-veins of the maples, the one not great to Him, nor the other small, each worked with the like unbroken am-

plitude of care,—then my soul is bowed down in wonder, and again lifted up in a mighty flood of joy, that God is here, that God is there, that everywhere God cares and God attends, that not the vastest things are vast beyond his domination, that not the tiniest things are small beyond his perfect love and care.

"And when my spirit is full of this revelation of surpassing wonder, with a bound, my heart leaps up to the recognition of the yet more glorious thing which it means besides; that if He cares for these things and attends to them, much more must He have care and tendance for every conscious spirit that moves among the hills and plains.

"The scientific account of the world-sustaining Energy has been the one thing which has given to me confidence, *a priori*, in that spiritual apprehensibility of God, which is the essence and core of Religion, above all, of the religion of Jesus of Nazareth."

With this disclosure of Christianity realizing the faith of Jesus, in union with both the Science and the Philosophy of the present age, we may leave our theme. Evidently Christianity belongs to the present and future as much as to any part of the past. "The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit and are life," said the Founder of our Faith. Those words have remained, and, as spirit,

they have been embodied, again and again, in the process of human affairs. The soul seeks personal realization of the everlasting gospel of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. Jesus announced that gospel and manifested it in life. In his own Person, he was prophetic of the goal towards which Humanity is moving. It was by no Chance, that the forces which had thitherto, apart, borne the world's civilization, received at their confluence eighteen hundred years ago, the Christian consciousness, and, thenceforward, carried it as their most precious possession, indeed, as their real reason for continued being.

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